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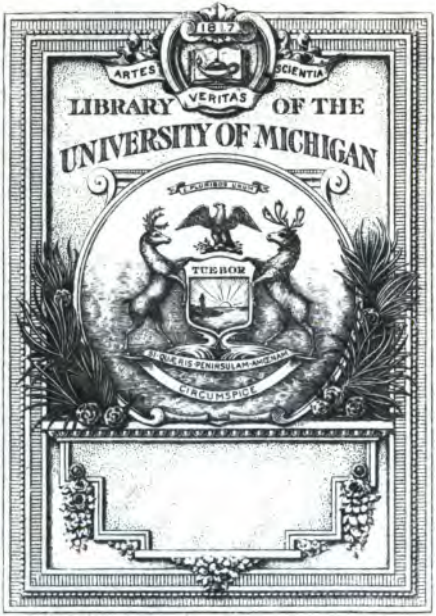
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THE TRUST.

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A COMEDY.

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY CHARLES BRECK.

Seu tristis veniam, seu contra lætus amicis:
Quicquid ero, dicam—*spes* causa fuit.

PROPERTIUS.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY D. LONGWORTH,

AT THE DRAMATIC REPOSITORY,

Shakspeare-Gallery.

1808.

T. & G. Palmer, printers, Philadelphia.

District of New York, ss. Be it remembered, that on the fifth day of January, in the thirty-second year of the Independence of the United States of America, David Longworth, of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit: "The Trust, a comedy, in five acts, by Charles Breck," in conformity to the act of the congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned," and also to an act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled, 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

EDWARD DUNSCOMBE,
Clerk of the District of New-York.

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The following attempt was hazarded after a perusal of various satirical dramas in blank verse, and the consequent extinction of a prejudice I had once entertained against comedy in this form.

Lest I any where appear to harbour indiscriminate and illiberal suspicions, the reader is apprized that one of the most virtuous personages of the piece is considered as of foreign birth and education; and that the tendency in two of the other characters to personal imposture exposes a circumstance which sometimes only occurs, while it forms a trait whose union (though surely not incongruous) with the peculiarities of either character, has not been derived from any prototype in real life. These few explanatory remarks are all that seem requisite when closed with an assurance to the fairer part of humanity, that an endeavour should be made to conciliate their forgiveness, were I positive that my cavils would at all be remembered but to create a comparative value in the more frequent and no less sincere indications of my respect.

C. B.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AMBERT.
MR. COURLAND.
HARRY COURLAND.
FREDERIC WORLACE.
MR. PRIMEVAL.
INFERENCE.
MOONSHINE.
ROBERT.
LOOBIN.

LOUISA COURLAND.
LUCRETIA PRIMEVAL.
HEBE.
DOROTHY.

Servants, a Sheriff's Officer, &c.

THE TRUST.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in* ROBERT'S *cottage.*

ROBERT *and* HEBE.

Hebe. Robert, you seem as sad as the strange gentleman Ambert who has lately come to live in our neighbourhood——what makes you look so gloomy?

Robert. Cloudy weather, cloudy weather!

Hebe. Why I thought that woman only had a right to be troubled with the vapours in cloudy weather.

Robert. Woman has a right to be troubled with any thing.

Hebe. Oh no, Robert: woman certainly possesses some share of fortitude.

Robert. Yes, a wonderful deal: she shows it every step she takes——only ask her shoemaker.

Hebe. Well, well——But, Robert, you look so gloomy.

Robert. Ah, in a country like ours, where we have zo much zunshine, dang it, every cloudy day——

Hebe. Should make us mindful of the pleasant one that's past.

Robert. Zo it should, zo it should; and yet I can't help thinking if I had been born in a fog, I could bear much better than I do, to zee the storm that's gathering.

Hebe. Storm? I see nothing like a storm.

Robert. Come hither; and I will tell you how long it has been hatching: you remember that about six

weeks ago, as surely as the morning came I used to be up——

Hebe. At very early hours, Robert.

Robert. Yes, just about the time your fashionable folk were going to bed——fashionable folk! what have we to do with fashion? Poor mother thought it was carrying matters far enough when, to follow a great lady's advice, she christened you after one Mr. Jupiter's waiting maid.——However, before day the waggon was loaded, old Joan in the thill, and I on my road to Philadelphia with a light heart, and a heavy assortment of turnips, and cabbages, and geese, and turkies, and——

Hebe. But was it then you first saw the signs of foul weather?

Robert. No, it was every afternoon on my return home with the load of a ton upon my heart and not the weight of a half cent in my pocket——it was then I saw a thousand mists floating about the waggon, of a thousand different shapes.

Hebe. Pray tell me——of what?

Robert. Of laces, and bonnets, and shawls, and feathers, and——

Hebe. Oh, delightful!

Robert. Of callimancoes, bandanoes, and comboys, and moories, and——dom it, an Indian or a woman couldn't name the one half of them.

Hebe. Don't I love you, Robert? You seem unkind to day——I never saw you so before.

Robert. Ah, I fear I have loved you too much.

Hebe. You *are* unkind to-day! What have I done to deserve your anger? I would do any thing for your sake.

Robert. I knew you would——that made me love you so——that makes me love you still (*pressing her to his bosom*)——But these muslins, these laces, Hebe!——they have all chang'd into such domnable shapes!

Hebe. What are you talking of? dear Robert, tell me!——What, what shapes?

Robert. A dungeon, a musty loaf of bread, a broken pitcher of water, and a vile heap of straw*.

Hebe. (*aside*) He seems bewildered! Great heaven, save my brother!——Oh, Robert, are you well? speak; I *will* be to you a sister.

Robert. (*taking her hand*) You always have been, yes, you always have been,——I don't charge you with unkindness, but I think we have both been struck with folly: you to be always craving after finery; and I to run seventy dollars into debt——

Hebe. Seventy dollars!

Robert. That I might never zay no to a zister whom I loved as I do you.

Hebe. Why did you not tell me before? I thought so much on the dresses that the money never once entered my mind.——But your produce?

Robert. My produce? (*whistles*) Many a time have I turned a hundred of hay into an ounce of rose drops, and a rood of corn into a yard of muslin; but a yard of muslin wouldn't make a gown.

Hebe. (*sighing*) Oh no, with a long fashionable trail it would require twenty——But your apples, your——

Robert. They were the last of all my produce, and the very last bushel that I had of them was turned into——a dish of macaroons. For your zake I was going the other day to change poor old lazy Joan into a little grey monkey; but honest Joan had zarved me long and faithfully; and I didn't like to part with the poor beast for any new acquaintance.

Hebe. Yet, Robert, you have something left?

Robert. (*clasping his hands*) No, I have nothing left!

Hebe. Yes, you have——you have——your sister (*falling on his neck*)——Who is it you are in debt to?

Robert (*after a pause*) No, I will not name him——but listen, Hebe: when all that I could zay was but a

* These expressions must be understood to arise from an exaggeration natural to Robert's fears.

feather on the breeze my creditors were raising, I called upon him, and hinted that it was in my power to afford him the pleasure of lending me seventy dollars: zo he zeemed very thankful for the favour, and lent the money.

Hebe. That certainly was kind.

Robert. This morning he zent for me, and zaid he was very willing to better our condition——to remove us from our present humble spot to a large farm.

Hebe. Indeed?

Robert. Yès; but you hav'n't heard all——(*with indignation*) he wanted me first to betray my friend!

Hebe. Cruel, wicked man! And what did you tell him?

Robert. I told him I was zorry he had lived so long in the world, and did not know that a sapling taken from the poor soil where it had sprung from an acorn, would never flourish in a richer one if its root were lopped away——and I told him that though I thanked him for his offer, I would zee him to the devil before I would accept it!

Hebe. (*with great anxiety*) Then——

Robert. He told me of my debt, and——

Hebe. (*with alarm*) Ah, what else?

Robert. No, nothing else——don't look zo pale, don't——no, nothing else.

Hebe. Yes, Robert, you told me of a dungeon! wait, wait till I return! (*goes out, and returns in a few moments with a bundle*) Here are the richest dresses I am worth——take them.

Robert. No, no, I wont.

Hebe. Robert, I once loved finery, but I detest it now——here, take them—sell them!

Robert. No, no.

Hebe. Then I will sell them myself.

Robert. (*kissing her*) Hebe, how I do love you!

Hebe. Take these, I supplicate you!——(*forces them into his hands*) take them, and sell them!

Robert. (*wiping away his tears*) Good girl, I'll try!

Hebe. Yes, yes, they will bring something (*exit Robert*)——and I will beg the rest! [*exit*

SCENE II.—*A great road—Dusk.*

Enter INFERENCE *and* MOONSHINE, *two meagre forms in very scant habits.*

Moonshine. (*groaning*) We are fatigu'd.
Inference. Then let us rest awhile.——
So really, Mr. Moonshine, you would write
Your travels through this country?——'Tis agreed;
But you'd not write them on this side the Atlantic?
Moonshine. Indubitably, Mr. Inference, not.
Inference. That is, you will return?
Moonshine. If our grand scheme do fail,
I will, forsooth, and in a book of travels
Float on the tide of popular applause.
Inference. Why, Mr. Moonshine, you might float on air.
Moonshine. Sir, I'm no bubble, and——
Inference. You *will* return?
Moonshine. Yes, (*sarcastically*) if your logic long avail us naught.
Inference. Or if the compass e'er point east and west.
Moonshine. I've seen it point due east and west.
Inference. (*staring*) Pray when?
Moonshine. When, sailing closely on the arctic pole,
I was ta'en ill with a delirious fever.
And even then, before a minnow bore
Away my bait——
Inference. You had made your line so tensile
You angled for a whale——a tolerable stretch,
But 'twould not reach a semicolon's length
To grace a page of travels through this country:
You're, therefore, not yet qualified——
Moonshine. How, sir?
Inference. Good Mr. Moonshine, we'll discuss the point

With copulative or disjunctive logic.
Moonshine. We will discuss it, sir, with swords or pistols.
Inference. Phlebotomy, my friend, may be a good
Specific for a feverish, flighty mind;
But I am not so very dexterous
As with a bullet to infract a vein,
Or ope it with a broad sword.
If you want bleeding there's young Lancet, who
Has gain'd as much true honour and renown,
Nay well nigh as much steady practice, sir,
As any blood-letter of high extraction.
But from what thesis, pray, will you conclude
That in our present lank and ghostly state
We can spare blood?——our muscles have grown flaccid,
And the residuum of a camel's carcase
Digested in the sand-bath of Arabia
Would yield more moisture than our arteries,
Shrunk into wither'd fibres——
Moonshine. Our skins, 'tis true, hang loosely.
Inference. And we seem
Like two poor weasels in a dearth of mice.
Moonshine. Or like two shades that without funeral rites
Have wander'd nine and ninety years upon
The burning borders of the river Styx,
Without an obolus at the century's close
To pay our passage o'er the infernal stream.
Inference. (*tittering*) Though I infer that you at least would not
Prove much above a ton or two in burden.
Moonshine. Sir!
You jest——why not include yourself?
Inference. (*giving his hand*) My friend!——
(*aside*) Mephitic vapour from the gulph of sin!
Moonshine. Dear Mr. Inference!——(*aside*) Curs'd blockhead, outline
Of a mere vacuum!

I am charm'd with an occasion to evince
My great respect for you—How well you look,
How very well! You must enjoy unbounded health!

Inference. (*aside*) He's quizzing, I conclude.

(*Mr. Courland gradually collects resolution enough to look round, and, astonished at the emaciated figure and tattered garments of Inference, starts back; while Harry smiles to recognise the face of the adventurer, who stands with his head down, too abash'd to speak.*)

Mr. Courl. (*apart to Harry*) Who in the name of Charon's hire is this

Harry (*apart to his father*) He is, no doubt, a paragon of high life
Cloth'd in the finest broad cloth.

Mr. Courl. (*to Inference*) Who, what are you?

Inference. (*bowing, and presenting a letter*) The honourable Mr. Scholium.

Mr. Courl. (*hastily looking over the letter*) The same, indeed; and yet——
(*to Inference*) Pray, sir, will—will
You let me offer some refreshment; for——
(*aside*) You seem most cursedly in want of it.

Inference. I thank—you, sir, I could—not eat a mouthful.——
(*aside*) Oh, my poor stomach, you must pay for this!

Mr. Courl. You may be dieting?

Inference. Yes, consequently:
My physician, sir——

Mr. Courl. Is an inhuman rascal.
His name, pray.

Harry Courl. (*apart to his father*) Unsuccessful knavery.——
(*to Inference examining his coat*) If, Mr. Scholium, I may be so bold——

Inference. No ceremony, sir——(*aside*) This prying chap
May recognise me!

Harry Courl. (*still examining his coat*) Pardon my odd query:
Has this coat been prescrib'd by your physician?
And what is this? (*pointing out a rent.*)
Inference. A rent.
Harry Courl. Oh wonderful!
Mr. Courl. (*waking from an uneasy reverie*) What is the matter?
Harry Courl. Utterly amaz'd!
This very honourable stranger, who
Will, no doubt, write his travels through our country,
Has thrown away two syllables upon
An actual fact, sir. [*exit*
Mr. Courl. Bless my soul!
Inference. Ha, ha,
Ha, ha, you will be witty, gentlemen——
(*aside*) And thence it seems that I am unsuspected.
Mr. Courl. Where is your friend the general, sir?
Inference. That you,
Good Mr. Courland, do him too much honour,
I'll furnish evidence intuitive,
Or probable——that is, my testimony (*bowing, and laying his hand on his heart.*)
Or I will make my language dialectic;
And then the method as you order may
Be categoric or conditional.——
But hold, would you prefer the argument
Ex minus probabile ad magis.?
Mr. Courl. A—any thing that I can understand.
Inference. (*again bowing*) The evidence of testimony, sir?——
Then know the general is no friend of mine.
'Tis true I saw him at my lord Catchbooby's;
But there the fellow was an upper servant.
Upon my first arrival in this country
Perchance I met him; and he teaz'd me so,
And wherewithal alarm'd me, I was fain
To have him mention'd in my letters as,
What he most certainly has never been,

A general. But this, Mr. Courland, this
Between ourselves. We for the present must
Feign ignorance of his diabolic mind;
For a more vile incendiary has not
Creep'd into being since the age of Nero.
(*Mr. Courland stares with dismay*) Don't be alarm'd, sir.

Mr. Courl. No—no—not at all.

Inference. In truth, sir, I conclude legitimately
This pseudo-general is an arrant knave,
One of the most consummate——

Enter Moonshine unexpectedly, and bowing to Mr. Courland.

gentlemen
Of modern times (*winking to Mr. Courland*)——Permit me, if you please. (*taking Moonshine's hand*)
This, my dear sir, is general Magnavantine

Moonshine. (*to Mr. Courland, who reluctantly bows*) You do me honour.

Mr. Courl. (*aside*) General Skeleton!

Moonshine. We had intended yesterday to pay
Our warm regards to you; but a mere trifle,
Which, Mr Scholium, you perhaps have mention'd—

Inference. It was a trifle, and escap'd my memory.

Moonshine. Yes, a mere trifle: we were robb'd, I think,
Of a few thousand pounds—and what was laughable,
The fellows left our purses bare—yes—and——
—Ha, ha, excuse me——the mischievous rogues
In merry mood, and to complete the jest,
Usurp'd our garments, and gave us their own.
Ha, ha,—(*apart to Inference*) Why don't you laugh?

Inference. Ha, ha, ha, ha.

Re-enter HARRY, *who whispers his father.*

Mr. Courl. (*apart to Harry*) And these are they?

Harry. (*apart to Mr. Courl*) The same, depend upon it;

I was a witness to the whole contrivance.

Mr. Courl. (*stealing a look at Inference and Moonshine*) 'Tis so, I fear——and you will, therefore, watch them.

Though don't imagine that the day is yours:
The hyperbolic, would-be general is not
Less purpos'd for the peasant Robert's sister——
Be dumb—this instant I will break it to him (*takes Moonshine apart*)

Harry Courl. (*aside*) Well, I may smile at least.

Inference (*apart to Harry*) A word, good youth:
(*pointing to Moonshine*) Alas, from the fallacious attitudes
Of that same Magnavantine, I infer
A stratagem against your father's weal—
Your father; for such Mr. Courland is
If it was Mr. Courland who begat you.

Harry Courl. A wise deduction, truly.

Inference. But had you
Been born among the ancients, I conclude
Your origin had been suppos'd divine,
Except, mayhap, upon the mother's side.

Harry Courl. It had been but a base insinuation:
You'd give me virtues I should blush to own,
When from your praise they'd catch a polish that
Would seem the mirror of my mother's frailty.

Inference. I don't assent: so, if you please, I'll show
The lapse of error between you and truth.
Shall I employ the analogic mode,
That is, the *modus ducens in absurdum?*

Exit Mr. Courland; from whom Moonshine has just separated, and now approaching Harry, bows with much confidence, but starts on recognising his features.

Harry Courl. (*aside*) Poor rascals! they shall not yet think I know them.

Enter HARRY COURLAND *at another door.*

Mr. Courl. Come hither, boy, a word or two on woman.

Harry Courl. If you converse on woman, my dear sir,
Make her's the measure of your speech, and talk
To all eternity.

Mr. Courl. Have you e'er seen
The setting sun?

Harry Courl. Yes, sir, a thousand times;
'Tis like the being now upon our thoughts:
Like her when she absents herself it leaves
A smile, and but a very transient smile,
Upon reposing nature.

Mr. Courl. No heroics.

Harry Courl. Woman's the spring of half our emulation,
Science itself to her must be indebted.

Mr. Courl. She has, I grant, found the perpetual motion.

Harry Courl. And when a wife so heavenly is the burden,
Cavillers judge 'tis requisite one have
The shoulders of an Atlas to support it.

Mr. Courl. But to the main point without further premise:
Intelligence has reach'd me from my friend
Residing at the southward——it is this:
That two great Europeans, just arriv'd,
Would, to become acquainted with our nation,
Skim o'er the surface of a twentieth part.
The one the honourable Mr. Scholium,
The other is a general Magnavantine.
Their tour he tells me will lie through this district,
And as they bear his formal letters I
Would much oblige him to receive them kindly.
Now, as the honourable Scholium
Has of the two the more wealth I intend him

For the girl your sister.
Harry Courl. Louisa! she
Is pre-engag'd to my friend Frederic Worlace.
Mr. Courl. Fool, what care I? I did not pre-engage her;
Besides, have not my many lessons taught you
That woman is too trivial or mischievous
E'er to be trusted to her inclination,
Or by the wise to merit an appraisement
In any thing but the appendage lucre?
Harry Courl. Indeed, sir, you have not.
Mr. Courl. No, lubbard, no?
Hear me; for I can still restrain my rage!
When honourable Mr. Scholium greets you
Receive him as if he already were
Affianc'd to the girl——Dare not to smile——
And for the general too I'll use device,
And slip his neck into the marriage-yoke.
Harry Courl. (*ironically*) How!—(*seems to consider*) Yes, now I've a glimpse of what you mean:
You'll make Louisa wed them both, and thus——
No, I am wrong——your scheme's a wise one, sir:
You mean that I shall be the general's spouse.
Mr. Courl. No, puppy; but the sister of that oaf
The peasant Robert.
Harry Courl. (*alarmed*) She? why, sir, she too
Is pre-engag'd!
Mr. Courl. Silence, know heretofore
I've wink'd at your attentions to the girl.
Harry Courl. Then why, sir, now prohibit them!
Mr. Courl. Why sir?
Because I thought love would like fire in time
Extract the burn 't had given——I was wrong,
Compulsion is the sole expedient left me:
You must, you shall forget the low-born wench.
Harry Courl. Would I not if low birth excluded worth?
But, sir, the very gold you prize so much
May be found purer in its earthy bed

Than in a great man's purse——I'd not condemn
A reach at grandeur from the base of merit.
But hope may be sown on altitude
Too high to germe and ripen into truth;
Or we may rise above our element
Like aeronauts, who gaily towering find
Their airy basis less and less substantial.
Mr. Courl. Good Harry, leave these cursed fantasies;
For I have thought, and peradventure hit on
Primeval's daughter and his purse for you.
Harry Courl. (*ironically*) Oh then I must resume a cheerful mein——
And yet the brow, sir, of a high-born damsel
May be too often, like the mountain's top,
O'ercast with vapours.
Mr. Courl. Jesting, sirrah, ha!
Mark me, you must, you shall forsake the girl!
All she depends on are her brother's earnings.
Harry Courl. Excuse me, sir——she has a treasure rich
And inexhaustible.
Mr. Courl. (*with surprise*) Hey, what, how, Harry?
Harry Courl. And yet she has drawn copiously from it
To make so vain a purchase.
Mr. Courl. You amaze me!
What purchase, what?
Harry Courl. (*bowing*) Your very humble servant.
Mr. Courl. But how, my boy, how was the payment made?
How issued?
Harry Courl. In the fond effusions, sir,
Of an o'erflowing soul (*Mr. Courland stamps with rage*) Pshaw, never mind:
My heart is past all ransom——it is sold——
Mr. Courl. Yes, to the devil, in his usual shape!

Enter a servant.

Serv. The honourable Mr. Scholium.
Mr. Courl. The honourable Mr. Scholium!
D-mnable luck——that he should come at this time,
Find me perturb'd—so choleric, so pale!
(*to the servant*) Request, do you hear, his honour to walk up. [*exit servant*
For the present we will drop the subject, boy:
Look at me, do I seem to have the ague?
Harry Courl. The ague, my dear sir! you are as red
As a fresh burning bush: passion becomes you.
Mr. Courl. Then as to health I'll meet with a good face
This son of wealth and plenty, Mr. Scholium;
He is, no doubt, a paragon of high life
Cloth'd in the finest broad cloth——Hark, he comes!
And I am so abash'd I feel constrain'd
To avert my eyes from his superior presence.

Re-enter servant.

Mr. Courland (*turning away his face, and awkwardly seizing the hand of the servant, whom he mistakes for Scholium*) My far renown'd and condescending guest,
I am your humble and obedient slave.
(*fearfully looking round, and discovering his mistake*)
Fool, scoundrel, where left you the gentleman?
Serv. Hobbling up stairs, your honour.
Mr. Courl. Hobbling up stairs?
Harry Courl. (*ironically*) His mighty bulk must be a clog to motion.
Mr. Courl. I hear his footsteps.

Enter Inference.

Mr. Courl. (*seizing his hand without venturing to observe his person*) Honourable sir,

Inference. Wherefore, to merit still your good opinion,
I'll prove you are not qualified to write
Your travels——pray be cool——Shall I employ
Two negatives particular ? for these,
If you allow them, can be made to serve
As minors of what we logicians call
The fourth mood of the second figure ; and
This is the mood *Daroco.*

Moonshine. Sir, plain English :
You rise to words I do not understand.

Inference. My subject's deep.

Moonshine. And yet your language flighty :
Be brief.

Inference. I will——now for my negatives :
You are not yet as mad as a march-hare,
You are not yet as blind as a black beetle,
You are not yet——

Moonshine. (*putting his hand to Inference's mouth.*)
Stop, man, I say : 'tis late ;
And we have yet to feign a specious plea
For our apparel and lank visages.

Inference. 'Tis true we once were in much better garb——
I mean when habited in borrowed suits,
We with their aid and well-assured fronts
Procur'd our letters to this Mr. Courland.

Moonshine. These letters say we are the sons of wealth.

Inference. Hence the corollary we've to lament,
That our scant semblance cannot but belie them.

Enter HARRY COURLAND *unperceived.*

Moonshine. (*approaching a post*) No matter—I've a remedy : you here
Observe the body of a post.

Inference. (*pretending to mistake Moonshine for the post*) Oh yes,

And the head too: (*laying his hand on Moonshine's head*) 'tis old and tottering.

Moonshine. (*seizing Inference's hand, and violently placing it on the post.*)

Blind man, you are wrong! this is the post——this, this.

Inference. Oh granted——a self-evident position.

Moonshine. Well, you observe this cord. (*taking one from his pocket.*)

Inference. I do, and yet

(*ironically*) I have my fears it will not bear your weight.

Moonshine. Sir! this insinuation——but, no matter——

The cord, which must be quite two yards in length——

Inference. A mere hypothesis, and to be prov'd

Experimentally with rule or yard-stick.

Moonshine. (*without attending to the interruption*)

The cord we'll wind three times or more around

Our three bodies.

Inference. How? This must be demonstrated.

Moonshine. Yours, mine——sir, you perplex me!

Inference. You must mean

To include the body of the post, methinks.

Moonshine. Why yes——and then vociferate for aid

As strenuously as the consumptive state

Of our pulmonic organs will permit.

Inference. Wherefore?

Moonshine. To seem the feigned personages

Depicted in our letters: you the great

And honourable Mr. Scholium,

I general Magnavantine.

Inference. I a gentleman

Decay'd, and you a routed general.

Moonshine. Sir, will you listen?

That after having valiantly repell'd

A host——

Inference. Of moths and bloody-minded gnats,

Musquetoes call'd, we made a brave retreat

With not e'en thread-bare raiment to our bones,

Or scarlet juice left in our veins sufficient
To raise a blush for our own nakedness.
Moonshine. You interrupt me, Mr. Inference.
Inference. (*provokingly calm*) Continue, Mr. Moonshine.
Moonshine. That after having valiantly repell'd
A host of footpads, we were forc'd to yield
To numbers, and were left in bondage here
To this uncivil post——Do you approve?
I wish to know if you approve the scheme?——
Inference. (*with feigned indifference*) The theory may pass: 'tis tolerable.
Moonshine. 'Tis admirable, sir, and spite on cavil
It may and shall be now reduc'd to practice.
Inference. Good Mr. Moonshine, pray preserve your temper;
Politeness bids me give the thing a trial.
Moonshine. (*aside*) You lie, you hang-dog; it is mere convenience:
You can't invent a better (*tying Inference and himself to the post*).
Inference. (*groaning*) Oh, do—not pull
The cord into such tension!
Moonshine. Pray you, pardon:
Do not suppose I meant to give you pain,
I who'd (*drawing the cord still more tightly*) relieve you from all earthly woes——
(*aside*) With pressing out your life, you sorry knave!
Inference. (*still groaning*) Oh! not so tight, I say!
(*catches the cord from Moonshine, and in his turn draws it with great violence*).
Moonshine. (*groaning*) Zounds, man, you'll kill me!
Inference. (*aside*) And of an arrant scoundrel rid the world.——
My dear, dear friend, I feel for you; and yet
You have concluded that the knot be tied (*tying the rope, while Moonshine again groans.*)
Harry Courl. (*aside*) A very odd contrivance, on my word.

Moonshine. Ho, murder!
Inference. Robbers!
Harry Courl. How now, good gentlemen. (*approaching them*)
Moonshine. Oh!
Inference. Oh!
Harry Courl. Why in the name of common sense is it
You break the peace with this exceeding uproar?
Moonshine. Maltreated, sir——we've been, alas, maltreated,
Lash'd to this post like culprits to a stake!
Inference. We've been purloin'd of——
Harry Courl. Ay?——how much?
Inference. One thousand pounds.
Harry Courl. How much?
Moonshine. Ten thousand pounds.
Inference. We have been lingering here——
Harry Courl. How long?
Inference. Three hours.
Moonshine. Yes, sir, three days, three tedious livelong days.
Harry Courl. Fellows, you mean three tedious livelong moments.
But you may pass the livelong tedious night here (*fastening them more firmly.*)
If you'd kill time with ratiocination,
I leave you free to indulge in every branch
Save that which is call'd pugilistic logic:
You have *a tenable position* now:
The *two extremes* (*touching Inference and Moonshine, who hang down their heads in confusion*) are *doubtful*, 'tis allow'd;
But as the *middle term* (*touching the post*) is not *unsound*,
There's promise the *conclusion* will be *lawful.*
Ha, ha, ha! (*exit*)
[*The scene closes on Inference and Moonshine.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in Mr. Courland's house.*

FREDERIC WORLACE *and* LOUISA COURLAND.

Fred. Worl. Louisa, you mistake me——think not I
Can recommend a breach of nature's law;
But surely naught must bind you to a parent
Who has abjur'd all that the name implies,
And, irremorseless, would devote his daughter
To the promotion of a sordid pride,
His motive——

Louisa Courl. Frederic, I can never act
In disobedience to my father's will:
Ere long it must grow pliant to our wishes,
I'm sure it must; and then we shall be happy.——
Nay, let us cherish hope, and be so now.

Fred. Worl. Hope!

Louisa Courl. And why not? It plucks the tares from nature,
Meliorates the desert into smiles
Of cultivated life. Hope nerves the mind,
And in the music of the prisoner's voice
It drowns the discord of his jarring chains*.
Then why should we sink into vain despondence?
Until of late my father has been fond,
Until of late he has been all-indulgent.

Fred. Worl. Until of late, Louisa?

Louisa Courl. Yes.

Fred. Worl. You mean
Before we met?

Louisa Courl. I do.

* "Spes etiam validâ solatur compede vinctum:
Crura sonant ferro, sed canit inter opus."
Tibulli Eleg. 6. *lib.* 2.

Fred. Worl. Then for your peace
We ought to part?
Louisa Courl. No, no, I said not, meant not so:
My meaning was to vindicate my father.
Fred. Worl. Sweet girl, he has no claim to vindication,
He, who can think his child without a soul,
And deem a charge repos'd in him by Heaven,
An article for sale.
Louisa Courl. Frederic, if you love me say no more.
Fred. Worl. Love you! Oh, I could pant away my life
Upon the breath that wrongs me with the doubt;
But must I see this fascinating form
Like the faint cheering of a distant ray
Caught through the shadows of a midnight wild,
Only to tremble lest I lose it?

Enter MR. COURLAND.

Mr. Courl. Ha!
Girl, leave the room this instant (*Exit Louisa*)——
Sir, you gaze——
I have more reason, when my froward daughter——
Fred. Worl. Your daughter!
Mr. Courl. Yes, she is not yours, is she?——
Then why claim her more than my other chattels?
She is the costliest piece of household stuff
I have in my possession——Mark my words
While in a gentle mood I give you warning:
This watch (*winding it up*) must half run down, when if it appear
That you still trespass on the premises,
Some honest rustic for redress shall make
Due application to your intellect.
Fred. Worl. Insolent!——(*aside*) But Louisa calls him father. [*exit*

(*offering his hand to Moonshine*) Your friend the general, Mr. Scholium ?——

Inference. (*aside to Harry*) For such he *passes.*

Moonshine. (*aside*) Thanks to my wits, I am not recollected——

Yes, sir, his horoscope and mine were one :
I know no mortal to himself affin'd——
In nearer points of genius and regard,
Than I to Mr. Scholium——(*aside to Inference*) Idiot, speak,
Return the compliment.

Inference. (*aside to Moonshine*) I'm silent.

Harry Courl. (*aside to Inference*) Your friend,
Perhaps he'd view a specimen of life
At variance with common rule——you'll ask him.

Inference. (*to Moonshine*) Will you, sir, view a curiosity ?

Moonshine. (*aside*) The puppy would indulge at my expense.

Inference. Will you, sir, view a curiosity ?

Moonshine. (*looking contemptuously but steadily at Inference*) With all my heart, my worthy Mr. Scholium.

Harry Courl. Then, general, if you'll ride——

Moonshine. I thank you, no :
I can view one quite at my leisure here (*his eyes still fixed on Inference.*)

Inference. Say, general, who is it you're scanning thus ?

Harry Courl. Good sirs, each of you does mistake the other,
As Mr. Scholium has mistaken me :
It is my wish to jolt awhile on horseback,
And take a stranger Ambert in our course.
I have not seen him yet ; though he has been
Two days, or more, within our neighbourhood.
He is esteemed an original :
His principles of action, 'tis reported,
Are hidden as the elements of matter——

What say you, gentlemen—come, no refusal——
And, general, you a soldier must be skill'd
In all the graceful perils of the saddle ;
Moreo'er a ride will stimulate your palate.
Moonshine. My appetite does not require provoking.
Inference. And weariness of junctures indicates
A lassitude in my arthritic parts.
Harry Courl. Why, gentlemen, for shame—look at yourselves,
Your tendency to morbid corpulence.
Ere night a plethora may be your death
Unless—I insist—you jolt awhile on horseback :
We have two jog-trot nags call'd Share and Culter ;
They've worn away the brawny loads of men
Almost as plump as you : so you will follow. [*exit*
Inference. Ah me ! ah me ! *elenchi ignoratio* !
Moonshine. His head's disorder'd, or his heart's of stone.
Inference. For we already——
Moonshine. Are but skin and bone !
[*exeunt following.*

SCENE II—*An apartment in the prison.*

ROBERT *solus.*

And this (*looking around*) the end of all my foolish kindness ! kindness—to whom ? to my poor zister !—where is she ? at home—and who will be her protector ? Young Harry Courland—yes, young Harry *does* love her——but, dom it, old Harry won't let hell rest till he ha' split their fond hearts in two ! Zo, Hebe will have no protector—What, what, if she were to lose her virtue !—I would throw her from me ! I would——

Enter HEBE, *who runs and falls into his arms.*

No, I would try to comfort her thus (*kisses her*) and with my tears !

Hebe (*looking around with dismay*) Oh, Robert!

Robert. Never mind, Hebe, never mind. (*a loud laugh without*)

Hebe. Ah, what is that?

Robert. The laugh of some who cannot feel misfortune.

Hebe. Were we as bless'd!

Robert. No, to feel too keenly is, indeed, calamitous; but let us thank Heaven we are not wholly proof against misfortune. Do you think the spot that is too barren for a weed to grow in, can bloom in harvest? No: where misfortune does not touch the soul, prosperity can never start the tear of gratitude——But come, zister, take courage; cause for sadness will not long attend the good: two rays of comfort do console me now.

Hebe. What are they?

Robert. An honest conscience and a virtuous zister.

Hebe. But is there nothing else——ah, tell me——my dresses?

Robert. Your dresses! we will talk of them another time.

Hebe. No, you must tell me now—would they fetch nothing?

Robert. Yes, I was offer'd zomething for them, but I thought it was too little—zo I wouldn't zell them.

Hebe. Not sell them! who made the offer?

Robert. Neighbour Beatdown, the paper-maker, zaid he was willing to give me ten cents a pound, but as all the dresses together didn't weigh more than four pounds, I told him I would zooner wear them myself than zell them zo pitifully under prime cost. (*Hebe claspts her hands in hopelessness*)—Then I went to neighbour Wimblewheel, and offered them to his daughter Nelly; but Nell zaid she would as zoon be of the zame mind with any body else as wear the clothes of any body else. But she recommended me to farmer Brambleton.

Hebe. (*with great anxiety*) Well—you went thither?

Robert. Yes, and Zally Brambleton zaid she had zo

great a friendship for you, that she was very willing out of pure charity to take the handsomest one at half price.

Hebe. (*with a smile of hope*) And you let her have it?

Robert. No; for she wanted it on credit, and that didn't zeem very charitable.

Hebe. Then?

Robert. Then I went to Tobithia Windabout and Deborah Veeraway, and one or two others of your acquaintance; but they treated me with scorn. Zo I told them that though new dresses might be pretty enough, I was zorry to find they thought it fashionable to wear new faces too, and that new faces according to my taste were domnably unbecoming.

Hebe. So all is hopeless! Cruel woman!

Robert. No, Hebe—you must not blame all womankind; for many a woman shed the tear of pity, and many an honest old friend of mine was not ashamed to follow the example: every one too lent me all that could be mustered; and I have gathered in the whole fifty dollars.

Hebe. Robert, dear Robert, you will be releas'd!

Robert. How? I owe seventy dollars.

Hebe. Yes; but I have seen the gaoler, who has told me that he will lend twenty dollars toward paying off the debt.

Robert. This is kind, I must allow, in one of his sort; but is there no other condition?

Hebe. Yes, one more.

Robert. And what is it?

Hebe. Only that I will agree to stay here in your place——Brother, brother, what's the matter? Why do you frown so?

Robert. The gaoler is a villain!

Hebe. Bless me! how?

Robert. He would have you remain here in my stead, would he?

Hebe. Yes, and he told me my lodging should be much more comfortable than this room.

Robert. Dom him! dom him! Listen to me, Hebe; he would invite you to a bed of moss, warm and pleasant for the moment; but there is a coldness in the earth it covers that would strike a chill to your heart, and it would burst, it would burst mine! Now I do wish my freedom! Hasten home, leave this hole of darkness!

Hebe. And must you linger here? Oh, no, no, no! Ah! I forgot—here is a letter for you; but I don't think it will bring much comfort: it comes from the crabbed gentleman who a few days since bought the large house on the hill, and who lives there almost alone. (*gives the letter to Robert*) He is called Ambert.

Robert. Oh, old Wryface—I saw him the other day; and he put me in mind of a snow storm—What could drive me into his crusty noddle? (*opens the letter and reads*) "You are imprisoned"—to be zure I am—"by the arm of cruelty: this letter, therefore, is to inform you that provided"——Oh now for zome black gaoler-like condition!——"provided"——But I wont, I wont put myself into a passion before you: Zo, there (*kisses her*) good bye.

Hebe. Must I then go?——(*aside*) Yes, to ask charity on my knees for you!

Robert. And, Hebe, if you meet the *gaoler* in your way, don't look at him, don't listen to him, and if it be possible, dear zister, don't speak to him! (*exit Hebe*) ——Well, now to finish this scrawl of a letter (*reads again*) "provided you follow my directions your release may be obtained: Send for Mr. Courland, mention to him your distress, and humbly beg him to grant you your liberty—if he refuse, show him the inclosed paper, and demand from him five hundred dollars"—— hey? (*rubbing his eyes*) Yes, dang it! I have not forgotten how to read——"five hundred dollars, for which

sum it entitles you to ask." The devil it does! Halloo, halloo, Hebe, come back, come back!

Enter MR. COURLAND.

Robert. (*putting the letter hastily into his pocket*) I didn't call you, zir.

Mr. Courland. It matters not: I've come once more to offer
The terms at first propos'd.

Robert. Zir!——(*aside*) Well, I must act the hypocrite, and pretend to fear this man. It is wrong, but let the blush it raises be the mask I wear, and zeem to show I dread a tyrant.

Mr. Courl. The terms you have already heard, and now
For the last time I name them.

Robert. Yet pray, zir——

Mr. Courl. Hear me, young rustic, doubly bolt your doors
Against my son, that hair-brain'd, harden'd spendthrift.
Your sister doubts my purpose to renounce him
If he still visit her; but I am not
So drivelling, weak, purblind, and fond a fool
As to o'erlook his vicious courses when
In their mad torrent they must bear away
Her innocence.

Robert. (*alarmed*) Ah!

Mr. Courl. Yes, beware his arts:
He aims at her seduction.

Robert. (*changing from alarm to indignation at the charge*) No! Harry would perish first! He loves her, it is true; he catches delight from her fond lips, but like the flower refreshen'd by the dew that gathers sweetness from it, her virtue is left blooming——Zo, come be kind, do now.

Mr. Courl. Nonsense.

Robert. And oh, consider what the world would be to me if I were to steal away my zister's happiness—

Compar'd with this abode a dungeon, for then the light of Heaven would be shut out completely.

Mr. Courl. If you agree to my proposals, say so, If not——

Robert. You'll let me linger here, try to break your own son's heart——and break poor Hebe's too?

Mr. Courl. Assuredly.

Robert. You will?

Mr. Courl. Assuredly.

But if you agree to my request, that is——

Robert. Agree to become hateful to myself—you will show pity for me! Ah, for shame! for shame! Your pity would come too late; like fire to the frozen wretch, 'twould only increase his misery!——(*taking the letter from his pocket, and producing the enclosed paper*) Here, zir, if you have not forgotten how to read, you may look over this little bit of paper.

Mr. Courl. Hand it me.

Robert. No, I have too great a regard for its safety; but there, read it (*holds it before him.*)

Mr. Courl. (*aside*) Hell! an old note that constitutes a claim
From the estate just purchas'd by the stranger!
I thought oblivion damn'd it——speak, who gave you this?

Robert. The old rugged gentleman on the hill—they call him Ambert.

Mr. Courl. (*aside*) Destruction seize him!

Robert. May be, you have seen him.

Mr. Courl. No——(*aside*) Curse him!

Robert. However, let us to business: from this debt, which you don't deny, you will subtract what I owe you, and then please to pay down the difference.

Mr. Courl. (*aside*) Fellow!——
In such a case accommodation's usual.

Robert. It is an article you deal so little in you wouldn't know its proper value I am afraid; yet if you have no cash at hand, you can give security: there's your grand mansion, your coach-house, your——

Mr. Courl. The premises! I'd sooner pledge my life!
But follow me; and we'll adjust the affair.——
(*aside*) I must o'ermatch this all sagacious clown!
[*exeunt*

ACT III.

SCENE I—*An apartment in* ROBERT'S *cottage.*

Enter HEBE *as if just returned from the prison*—HARRY COURLAND *following.*

Harry Courl. Wheu! Hebe, stop—who are you racing with?
Hebe. (*turning round*) Ah, Harry.
Harry Courl. I have been pursuing you
This half hour.
Hebe. Me?
Harry Courl. (*taking both her hands*) Yes, for I knew you led
To happiness.
Hebe. Alas!
Harry Courl. What lovely woman
Does not? She may have eccentricities;
So has the compass that directs our path
In safety through the perils of an ocean.——
But, Hebe, I have been o'ercome with laughing:
Two tatter'd wights in a morass just by——
Why bless me, you don't smile! what is the matter?
Hebe. My melancholy visage must depress you.
Harry Courl. It makes me love you more, sweet Hebe, it does!
A constant smile is not a flattering omen:
It shows a want of character—as evergreens,
You know, betray the poorness of the soil

They spring from——But, tell me, where have you been?

Hebe. (*hardly able to articulate*) To see poor Robert.

Harry Courl. Why Robert is your brother, and lives here,
If I may speak from fifteen years' acquaintance.

Hebe. Harry!

Harry Courl. Sweet girl, what grieves you?

Hebe. Robert is in prison!

Harry Courl. In prison!

Hebe. (*falling with faintness into his arms*) Yes, in the county gaol!

Harry Courl. Thou more than angel!
Be not disquieted; I will relieve him.

Hebe. Will you?

Harry Courl. Yes, if I have a soul I will!

Hebe. Then go——ah, go, go, now!——I feel much better.

Harry Courl. Are you quite well?

Hebe. Quite well.

Harry Courl. And quite compos'd?

Hebe. (*trying to smile*) Oh yes.

Harry Courl. (*viewing her with tears of fondness*) You are too tenderly bewitching!
You know not how I love you!
The memory of this (*kissing her*) shall be the soul
To animate me in your brother's cause.
He shall return with me——good bye, dear Hebe.

HEBE *goes into an inner apartment, while* HARRY *exit at an outer door——and presently after enter at the opposite door* INFERENCE *and* MOONSHINE, *scarcely able to walk and much bespattered with mud.*

Inference. The door was on a jar: therefore we enter'd ——
But not to break the thread of our discussion——

Moonshine. (*peevishly*) I am tired with your logic.

Inference. Mr. Moonshine,
When the Laplander can forget his deer,
Or the Kamschatdale live without his dog;
I will forego the impulse of my nature,
And part with dialectic——To renew
The argument commenc'd ere we were thrown
Into the marsh——and that we were thrown thither
Is ocularly, sir, demonstrable. (*significantly viewing his own and Moonshine's miry conditions.*)
Though if you sceptically doubt the fact——

Moonshine. I tell you, Mr. Inference, once for all,
I do not doubt the fact.

Inference. And yet, perhaps,
You doubt the creatures blind that bore
Against our wills yourself and me headlong
Into the miry marsh——You doubt it——yes,
From your demeanour I perceive you do.
(*Moonshine all this while does not attend to Inference, but writhes his features as if in considerable pain.*)
How shall I prove it?——there are various ways:
The epichirema and prosyllogismus,
Sorites—nay too, theorems and problems,
That is, positions, sir, demonstrably
Both speculative and e'en practical.
What figure is most suited to your mind?
Barbara, celarent, darii, ferio, quoque, primæ,
Or
Cæsare, camestres, festino, baroco, secundæ,
Or——

Moonshine. Zounds, Mr. Inference, you have grown stark mad.

Inference, (*after a pause of surprise and mortification*) Then, sir, I am empower'd to aid you
Whene'er you write your travels through this country.

Moonshine. Sir!
My book of travels is to instruct the world.

Inference. (*aside*) In falsehood I infer.

Moonshine. Must you be told
I am no incommunicative churl,

No sable substance borrowing a gloom
With every ray of light that is imbib'd ?

Re-enter HEBE *with her cloak, &c., still on.*

Hebe. (*aside*) Who can they be ?—they look like robbers !

Inference. (*perceiving her, and apart to Moonshine*) Hist !

Hist, Mr. Moonshine, there's a woman's face.

Moonshine. (*apart to In.*) Well, no great wonder, sir : we are not in
Constantinople.

Inference. (*apart to Moon.*) Yet I fancy when I see her
Woman a being just dismiss'd from heaven.

Moonshine. (*apart to In.*) You mean a fallen angel. (*to Hebe*) Child, come hither.
Have you aught like refreshment in the house ?
Pray, be not under any apprehensions :
We are two gentlemen just from the chase.
The briers and bushes, as you may discern,
Have not been very civil to our habits,
Which do display as many slits and rents
As if they were mere gaps for Time to look through.

Hebe. (*in a tone of compassion*) They do, indeed, sir !

Moonshine. Now, if you will but lead us to your pantry.

Hebe. Indeed, indeed——I——gentlemen, I would ; but——

Moonshine. Oh, miss, you need not be o'er nice ;
For nothing, howe'er tough, can blunt the edge
Of my keen appetite, or——

Hebe. (*clasping her hands*) I have nothing !

Moonshine. (*apart to In.*) She is a woman—

Inference. (*apart to Moon.*) So I conclude.

Moonshine (*apart to In.*) I have a bauble in my pocket——Here,

My pretty one, here is an ornament
Set with a diamond of the clearest water——
Nay, don't refuse it.
Inference. (*pulling Moonshine by the sleeve*) Hold,
Mr. Moonshine—have you lost your reason?
Moonshine. (*apart to Inference*) Hush, it is only
brass—an article
That passes current with the female sex——
Only observe how much it sparkles, miss.
It cost me twenty guineas.
Hebe. Twenty guineas!
Moonshine. So you must not refuse it, positively——
For my sake you must not.
Hebe. (*aside*) For *your* sake, Robert,
I will not.
Moonshine. Take it, fair nymph:
'Twill from a necklace grace that ivory bosom.
Hebe. I thank you, sir, I thank you!
Moonshine. 'Tis a trifle.
Don't mention it,——But (*significantly*) tell me, miss,
your larder,
Your larder, is it empty now?
Hebe. Yes, sir, it is!
Inference. Oh no, you mean that it soon will be,
ma'am,
After we've gain'd admittance.
Hebe. Sir, indeed
It is at present.
Moonshine. Empty, empty! what?——
I'll not believe it, no, child.
Inference. Nor will I——
(*aside*) That I may feast on my imagination.
Moonshine. For shame! have you forgotten my rich
boon?
Hebe. Ah no, sir, I address my prayers above
For your requital in a future state.
Inference. Which, 'tis conclusive, will erelong ar-
rive;

If you do not supply our *present* wants.
Hebe. I wish I could !——You do, alas ! appear
In need of sustenance——yet, gentlemen,
After this bounty you cannot be poor.
Moonshine. No, no, not poor ; but our misfortune is,
That each of us since yester eve has been
In galling durance to a horse's back:
So have you aught or naught within your larder?
Hebe. Ah, why suspect me when I tell a truth
That strikes me with reproach——The only cottage
In all the country round reduc'd to want
Is ours.
Moonshine. (*with importance*) How, child?
Inference. (*to Hebe*) Don't weep, don't,
Hebe. Of this want
My own imprudence only is the cause !
But, gentlemen, there is upon the hill
A house where lives one Ambert—he——
Moonshine. One Ambert?
Then tell me—curse it—without more ado,
Whether his temper's easy or morose.
Inference. (*reproving him with irony*) General, that question is impertinent :
It presupposes you devoid of wit
To mitigate an acrid disposition
With the mild, milky flow of your own temper.
Moonshine. If the man's crabbed let him be so still :
I like not crusty nature in a smile :
'Tis like a lemon, it becomes insipid
As soon as it grows sweet——(*to Hebe*) However, girl,
He's rich, say you?
Hebe. Yes, very rich, I'm told——But, sir——
Moonshine. (*going*) Come, Mr. Scholium, it is time we walk.
Hebe. But how shall I discharge my obligations?
Return a few weeks hence ; and Robert,
Yes, Robert will repay you.
[*exit Moonshine without deigning an answer*
Inference. Consequently, ma'am——

Ho, general, ho——(*aside*) The mercenary wretch
Would have the start of me——Ho, general, ho! [*exit Hebe.* This gift!
Great Providence, I thank thee—in my brother's name! [*goes out of the cottage*

SCENE II.—*An apartment in* AMBERT'S *house.*

Enter AMBERT, *followed by a servant.*

Amb. Has Loobin, the old cottager, yet come?
Serv. He has, sir.
Amb. Send him hither.
[*exit servant, and in a few moments*

Enter LOOBIN.

Loobin, take this, (*handing him a purse*) give it to Frederic Worlace,
The English youth addressing Courland's daughter.
Loobin. And if, sir, if he ask me whence it came——
Amb. As you dread my resentment do not tell him.
Loobin. Well, well, sir.
Amb. Loobin.
Loobin. Do you fear me, sir?
Amb. Ha! who approaches?——leave me.
[*exit Loobin at one door, and a few moments after, at the opposite end of the stage,*

Enter servant showing in FREDERIC WORLACE.

Fred. Worl. May I hope
You'll pardon this intrusion from a stranger
When, sir, you know I come to plead the cause
Of suffering humanity,
(*Ambert returns Frederic's bow with some reserve, and beckons the servant to leave the room*)
Not long since
The secret sway of an o'erruling power

Led me along an unfrequented road——
I left my path, as I conceiv'd, to chance;
Pleas'd with the play of melancholy, that
Form'd every utterance of instinctive life
Into a moan of sorrow, and devis'd
A thousand groups of correspondent gloom
Out of a breaking cloud that just had shed
A deluge over the surrounding scene.
I watch'd it long: at length my eyes, depress'd
With sympathy for the imagin'd woe,
Sought respite on the earth——but there were startled
In shuddering pity at a sight as real
As it was wretched! 'Twas, sir, an old woman:
Scatter'd around her were her outward garments,
Drench'd with the rain——
Her wither'd arms lay lifeless on the ground
As she reclin'd against the riven trunk
Of an old blasted tree——To her bare head
A few white straggling hairs with moisture cleav'd,
Over her deadly visage lingering drops
Rested in wrinkles furrowed by the hand
Of fourscore years at least——Her eyes were rais'd,
But pallid ghastliness o'erspread them too,
And all the token of remaining life
Was a convulsive ague on her lips.
My mind was lost in horror——when her voice
Waken'd my palsied faculties to action,
And with the assistance of a passing neighbour
I bore her feeble body to his house.
He ask'd her place of residence, and she
With the faint accents of expiring age
Reply'd she had no home, nor knew how to
Procure one.

Amb. (*in a contemptuous manner*) You, of course, believ'd her.

Fred. Worl. As firmly as I had the voice of inspiration!

She nam'd a neighbouring cottage, and declar'd
That half her life she had resided there,

But that——

Amb. (*unable to suppress his resentment*) But what, sir?

Fred Worl. That not many hours before
A new, unfeeling, avaricious landlord
Had clos'd its doors upon her helpless state.

Amb. This monster then——

Fred. Worl. May be perhaps conjectur'd.

Amb. Have you done, sir?——

Fred. Worl. If I've awaken'd the remorse of guilt
I have perform'd my wish.

Amb. But, sir, not mine!
I would awaken the remorse of shame!
Why not speak boldly out, and like a man
Accuse me? It is I you mean——then tell me so!
And if you wish not to condemn unheard,
Hear what I have to say, and blush to know
That on a feeble, frail, and crazy charge
You'd wreck the credit of an honest man!

Fred. Worl. If wrong, sir, I am open to conviction.

Amb. You've seen the outside only of the hag
On whose foul lips my crime has been created.
She seem'd in want——'twas fiction all.

Fred. Worl. When forc'd——

Amb. Listen, rash youth, ere you insult me further!
This woman has but to expend a breath
And solve a doubt with which my soul's afflicted;
Yet e'en a breath she thinks too merciful!
If absolutely sinking to the grave
Would she not start at conscience, not disclose
A truth which, told, would save her from perdition?
The secret wasting in her perjur'd soul
Is one on which my peace—my life depends:
Nature, and love, and gratitude, and duty,
Command her to reveal it——Yet she will not!

Fred. Worl. How?

Amb. No persuasion can entice it from her;
And I would wring it now!

Fred. Worl. Should it die with her?

Amb. Oh God! could I survive it?
Fred. Worl. I have gone,
I fear, too far——will you forgive me?
Amb. Torture!
Young man, you've rent my feeling in a tender part;
And every nerve beats sympathy! But I
Forgive you! [*exeunt severally*

SCENE III.—*An apartment in the prison——A number of miscreant-prisoners seated round a large table; some playing cards, and one throwing dice with* HARRY COURLAND.

First Pris. (*after having thrown*) The watch is mine—what have you next to stake?
Harry Courl. Vengeance and fury, sir, what have I?
First Pris. What?
Your hat.
Harry Courl. Its value then.
First Pris. Three dollars.
Harry Courl. Three!
It cost me nine——But—quick—how many throws?
First Pris. Two, if you like.
Harry Courl. Agreed——(*they throw twice alternately*) Misfortune!——Well,
My coat——how much against my coat?
First Pris. Five dollars.
Harry Courl. The tailor's bill was twenty——but no matter (*they again throw*)——
Perdition to the game! Here (*giving up his hat and coat*) they are yours.
First Pris. (*putting on Harry's coat, &c., and offering in return an old tattered jacket and torn hat*) And this coatee and hat pray, sir, receive
In evidence of my regard——See there,
They suit you well: one would at least make oath
You'd worn them all your life——Resume your seat.
Harry Courl. I have resolv'd to play no more.

First Pris. Once more:
Three dollars—cash—against your whip and spurs.

Harry Courl. How?——make them four; and it shall be a bargain.

First Pris. Agreed. (*they resume their seats and play*)

Enter unperceived LUCRETIA PRIMEVAL *and* ROBERT.

Robert. And zo, ma'am, your father's name is Primeval, and he takes this for Mr. Courland's house.

Luc. Prim. Yes, but where is the card-room? I bade you lead me to it.

Robert. (*putting his hand over her mouth*) Softly, ma'am, this is the card-room.

Second Pris. Tom, that is a misdeal.

Third Pris. You lie, you rascal, (*both continuing to altercate in dumb show.*)

Luc. Prim. Oh lard, I hope there's to be a duel.

Robert. No, ma'am, there won't be any: these gentlemen——

Luc. Prim. They are no gentlemen if they don't fight, if they don't hear the cries of Honour.

Robert. Oh, I dare say they hear her, miss——that is, if she's a woman——but they don't heed her.

Luc. Prim. Then they are a set of vile barbarians.

Robert. May be so——But how do you know that Honour is a woman?

Luc. Prim. How? Doesn't she force many a poor wretch to an untimely grave?

Robert. Very true.

Luc. Prim. Was she ever satisfied with one admirer at a time?

Robert. No, nor with two either, unless she could set them both together by the ears.

Luc. Prim. Has she not all the tenderness of the sex?

Robert. Yes, I am told she is mortally afflicted if one

happens only to tread on her toe, and that she will die with the vapours——

Luc. Prim. Unless the person at hand be a gentleman, and willing——

Robert. To be run through the body or shot through the head: now, what a savage, unconscionable hussy this Mrs. Honour must be, to think that our blood was intended to heal her wounds; which is to suppose the human body her salve-box——Dom her, she disgraces the worthy family into whose name she has wheedled herself: she ought to be hooted out of all civilized company.

Luc. Prim. (*loudly*) I tell you she ought not (*the prisoners look round with surprise, and while she is speaking disperse.*)——But who is it I am talking to? Who are you? nothing but an argument would make me so far forget myself. This is no drawing-room, it is the servants' apartment, puppy! You shall suffer for this—Paur, papa, paur! [*exit*

Robert. Wheu! there she goes, an empty blast of wind——(*seeing Harry*) Who is here? One of the tatterdemalion-gentry, it zeems——I zay, mister, are you a loser?

Harry Courl. Are you a scoundrel?

Robert. (*rubbing his eyes*) Harry! Is, is that you, Harry?

Harry Courl. Yes, and were it not
For Hebe I would beat you to a powder.

Robert. In the mean time, Harry, I might *dust* your jacket. But, pshaw, you are not in earnest: zome freak of yours, Harry, isn't it, hey? (*handling his torn jacket.*)

Harry Courl. Fellow, hands off.

Robert. Fellow, hands off! why you talk, Harry, as if you had a new beaver-hat and a coat of the last cut.

Harry Courl. As if, sir, you would say,
I spent my words upon a rascal.

Robert. Harry!

Harry Courl. Robert,
How came my father here?

Robert. Ask him ; and if he like he'll tell you.

Harry Courl. 'Twas through your means.
'Tis in his cause I have been thus reduc'd !
Why did you not, sir, treat him like a man ?

Robert. Because he first forgot the duties of humanity, and did not treat me like a fellow-creature.

Harry Courl. Explain.

Robert. No, Harry, I would not pain you with remorse—I would not tear an excrescence from a favourite plant to leave a bleeding wound.

Harry Courl. All evasion, and I now contemn you.

Robert. What, Harry ?

Harry Courl. You utterly have forfeited my friendship.

Robert. Why then you have been playing friendship ! the heart that is so wofully combustible as to flash away in a minute's anger, has never stood the warmth of fifteen years' affection.

Enter HEBE *unperceived.*

Harry Courl. The love I bear your sister must protect you.

Hebe. (*coming between them*) And Robert——
Oh speak, would *you* harm any one that loves me ?

Robert. I didn't expect you would return so soon.

Hebe. You could forget then that I was your sister. (*turns away in tears*)

Harry Courl. No matter, Hebe, *I* at least do love you.

Robert. (*to Hebe*) You are not angry ?

Hebe. Not angry, but distress'd at your indifference.

Robert. (*taking her hand*) I am zorry, indeed I am——I was out of humour when you came.

Hebe. Ah me ! with whom ?——you do not answer, Robert——
Why, Harry, Robert says——can I believe him ?——
He has been out of humour——pray, with whom ?——

You neither will reply——(*with a smile*) then you have both
Forgotten——have you not?

Robert. No, not entirely.

Hebe. Do not say so
If you regard my peace——come, you must both
Embrace me——Yes, and him that does it first
I will esteem the kinder of the two.
(*At these words Harry and Robert both advance to embrace her, when she suddenly draws back; and the two friends fall, as if accidentally, into each other's arms.*)

Harry. Robert!

Robert. Harry!

Hebe. There, all is now made up.
Are you not friends again?

Robert. I be-believe we are, if Harry thinks so.

Harry Courl My friend, your pardon——
Yes. I have been too hasty——But my father?

Robert. Well, if it must be so——He wished me to become a villain.

Harry Courl. Robert!

Robert. And because I had the honesty to refuse, he treated me as if I had been one.

Harry Courl. How?

Robert. I was indebted to you both; I owed you friendship, but I owed him gold; and he, to be zure, offered a discharge if I would agree——dom it,——

Harry Courl. Well,

Robert. If I would agree to forbid your visits to Hebe, and break her heart with a false tale that you were a seducer.

Harry Courl. (*with stern anxiety*) Are you sure, very sure?

Robert. As zure as that when he found I treated his offer with contempt he threw me into prison; and that I owe my deliverance to the kindness of a neighbour.

Hebe. You then are liberated?

Robert. (*kissing her*) Yes, Hebe.

Hebe. (*clasping her hands in gratitude*) And the neighbour?

Robert. (*wiping away his tears*) Excuse my tears. ——He is an odd, rough kind of a body, an honest hypocrite who would pass himself for a bear when he is at heart a man—they call him Ambert. He discovered my misfortune, and sent me this claim upon your father (*showing Harry the bond*), who would not pay it: so I imprisoned him in my turn——don't start, Harry: I did intend he should be confined two days—he has been confined two hours, and my revenge has gone off in a surfeit. Here, take this (*giving him the bond*), and do with it what you please.

Harry Court. (*pressing Robert's hand*) Now I am sensible that I have wrong'd you——
So has my father———Hebe, you must plead
For my forgiveness. [*kisses her, and exit*

Hebe. No, there is no occasion, is there?

Robert. No, he is a noble fellow; and I regard him more than ever.———(*seeing Moonshine's present in her hand*) But who gave you that knick-nack; was it Harry?

Hebe. Oh, no.

Robert. No!

Hebe. No, it was given to me by a stranger.

Robert (*alarmed*) Ah!

Hebe. He told me it was worth twenty guineas: then I remembered you, and therefore it was I returned so soon, hoping it would be taken for your debt.

Robert. But this stranger, did he ask for nothing in return?

Hebe. Yes, he and his companion, poor men, put me to the blush——their appetites were very keen; and I wished much to satisfy them.

Robert. (*with dismay*) What, and did you?

Hebe. No, for it was not in my power.

Robert. How?

Hebe. They at length departed, and with them went all I had to give.

Robert. Your innocence!

Hebe. No, Robert, my blessing.

Robert. Was that all?

Hebe. Yes, I had no provision in the house, and——

Robert. Provision! Oh, now I understand you.—— But, Hebe, we will return the gewgaw——let me see it.——Worth twenty guineas! It isn't worth twenty cents: it's only the one eye of an old pair of spectacles. However, keep his present until you see the gentleman again, when you must return it; and I will pay him for the loan of it (*clinching his hand*). [*exeunt*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in* AMBERT'S *house.*

Enter LOUISA COURLAND *and* FREDERIC WORLACE, *followed by a servant.*

Fred. Worl. (*to the servant*) You'll let your master know immediately. [*exit servant*

Louisa Courl. Was there aught like compassion in his manner?
And even——even then what if it were
The expansion only of a freezing soul?

Fred. Worl. Your gentle words would penetrate his sense,
Like the breath's influence, that can melt its way
Into a mass of polar-frozen ice.——
But false report misleads you: he's a man
Not unendow'd with sensibility.

Louisa Courl. Yet if it tend to a revengeful purpose,

Fred. Worl. For what?

Louisa Courl. I know not, yet I fear it will!
Too powerful feeling vitiates the judgment:
From inward heat the fever'd wretch, alas,
Will misconceive the external temperature,

While he who is in every point susceptive
Misjudges often from a biass'd heart.
What if this man still persecute my father!
Oh, I have heard such stories of a prison;
Its glooms suffuse the mind with melancholy,
And madness oft ensues!—Save, Frederic, save
My father! He is languishing amid
Cold, poisonous damps!

Fred. Worl. There is no cause for such alarm, believe me.

Louisa Courl. You cannot save him? No, your application
To this harsh man may fail——

Fred. Worl. All I am worth——

Louisa Courl. Then you'll redeem his liberty, you have
A sum sufficient, have you not? No, no,
You hesitate!

Fred. Worl. Thou charm of pious virtue,
All I am worth is yours; but will it give
You peace? (*taking bank-notes from his pocket*)

Louisa Courl. Ah, notes!
(*receiving and examining them*)——And have you nothing more? Are these your all?

Fred. Worl. They are.

Louisa Courl. (*with hopelessness*) Are they, indeed?

Fred. Worl. Louisa, can you doubt me?

Louisa Courl. Oh, no, no, no——

Enter AMBERT.

Frederic, there he is!

Fred. Worl. (*to Ambert*) Once more I trespass on your solitude,
And, sir, to invoke you to an act of mercy.
You have, I trust, the power to discern.

Amb. I may have, sir——
Proceed.

Fred. Worl. The object for whom I entreat,
The female——

Amb. Be dumb as death! tell not her tale again,
Nor tear my being from its feeble hold
To glut the harpy's malice!——Once, once,
Sir, I forgave you, but——Would you aught else?
Fred. Worl. I came to win you into sympathy
With an afflicted angel——
It seems—or I am willing to believe—
Your softening brow relaxes at a name
That should, must be, the harbinger of peace.
Do you not sometimes meditate an act
Of which reflection is the sole reward?
Amb. Not sometimes, sir!
Once more I ask the motive of your visit.
Fred. Worl. You know a Mr. Courland.
Amb. Ha!
Fred. Worl. He is imprison'd,
And through your means.——Will you not reverence
The feelings of his daughter? (*presenting Louisa*)
Louisa Courl. (*kneeling*) Oh, sir, pity,
Pity the anguish you've created here;
Though I have never given you offence,
Unless I do it pleading for a parent!
Speak, has he wrong'd you?
Amb. (*in a revengeful manner*) Wrong'd me!
Louisa Courl. I'll atone:
What is his fault?
Amb. His fault!
Louisa Courl. Or what his crime?
Oh tell me, tell me! do not turn aside.
What is his crime? My tears shall wash away
Your deep remembrance of it!
Amb. As soon shall
The morning's dew from the earth's bosom sweep
The adamantine rock!
Fred. Worl. Louisa, rise,
Why thus degrade yourself?
Louisa Courl. Oh, no, no, no!
There is no degradation here.——I cannot,
I will not rise until he grant my prayer.

Fred. Worl. He is inflexible—too iron-hearted.
Amb. Sir, sir, you judge too rashly!
Fred. Worl. You, as if
This melting object were not at your feet.
Yes, when a guiltless woman pleads for mercy
May he who has the power to deny it,
Ne'er cherish hope that pitying saints above
Will ever plead for him.
Amb. Indeed? Remember well this malediction,
Remember I forgive you——and repent! (*exit, tearing himself from Louisa's hold*)
Louisa Courl. He has then gone——(*rising and in a tone of despair*) and so has all my hope!
Fred. Worl. Be comforted, my soul.
Louisa Courl. You cannot save
My father.
Fred. Worl. No; but Heaven will for your sake:
It has recall'd two strangers to my memory;
Though in appearance poor, they are believ'd
To be men of large fortunes.
Louisa Courl. Have you seen them?
Fred. Worl. Twice at a distance.
Louisa Courl. When, where the last time?
Fred. Worl. Just as we reach'd this house I caught a glimpse
Of them approaching it——they now, perhaps,
Are here.——I will apply to them.
Louisa Courl. Will you?
Fred. Worl. Yes, and all will be well. (*takes a handkerchief from his pocket to wipe away his tears, and drops a green pocket-book, which opens in falling.*)
Louisa Courl. Why do you weep?
Fred. Worl. With joy, my love: the hope that brightens there (*in her countenance*)
Must be the dawn of coming day. [*exit*
Louisa Courl. Alas,
It was so faint it has already faded!——

(*seeing the pocket-book*) The pocket-book I made for
Frederic—
He chose the colour green ; and when I ask'd
Him why, he rallied me, and said 'twould serve
To put him on his guard.
(*takes it up*) 'Tis open, and——Almighty Father, hide
This moment in oblivion !——Yet——yet
——(*pauses in an agony of doubt*) Can it be ?——Yes,
I have been blind till now !
A rich, an ample treasure hidden here,
An avarice lurking in my Frederic's soul!
Avarice, false man, and perjury !——Until
This moment I have thought you lov'd me ! What,
What shall support me now ?—Pride, an indignant spirit!
There (*laying the pocket-book on the table*), I will tell
him he has lost my heart,
And (*scornfully*) left my rival here ! [*exit*

Enter, at another door, INFERENCE *and* MOONSHINE.

Inference. And Mr. Moonshine, your last figure, trust me,
Was a mere sophism of composition :
Whence to converse on woman still, the best
Subject in nature for an argument.
Moonshine. Truly, for then we need not be confin'd
To any one point, but at pleasure may
Veer with her round the compass.
Inference. Granted——But,
But how stands our discourse——stay, stay—methinks—
Yes, it stands thus :——
I broach'd the daring truth, that every woman
Was like to Nestor——In loquacity,
Retorted you——My next assertion, being
Her pliancy, you as abruptly carp'd at,
And swore her genius to severe restraint
Bent not, but like a form of potter's earth
Would grow more stubborn with opposing flame.

You us'd a second simile, and thus:
Her will, when violently contraven'd,
Must bear down all before it;
But mild resistance will impair its force
As the calm air exhausts the cannon-ball,
Which would, mayhap, but little reverence him
Who'd stop it whizzing from the cannon's mouth.
Thus stands, sir, our discussion, and——

Enter LOOBIN *unperceived.*

Moonshine. (*who, wholly inattentive to Inference, has been lingering about the room, discovers and lays his hand upon the pocket-book*). Ah, ha!

Inference. Pray, Mr. Moonshine, what is that?

Moonshine. A pocket-book.

Inference. Its owner?

Moonshine. (*reading Frederic's name on it*). Seems to me
One Frederic Worlace——and what's that?

Inference. (*having picked up a paper that fell from the pocket-book*) I'll read it.
(*Reads, while Moonshine examines the contents of the book and Loobin steals between them*)

"A sacred trust held in charge for the only daughter of Mr. Mervin."
These are mere words—the substance is with you.
(*Turns, and starts at meeting Loobin's face instead of Moonshine's*).

Moonshine. (*half to himself*) Ten thousand dollars!
(*turning, meets in silent dismay the countenance of Loobin.*)

Loobin. Gentle folk, you pause.
Is it I that interrupt you?——With your leave, sir (*to Moonshine*)
That pocket-book——and (*to Inference*) with yours, Mr. Barebones,
That paper too——Ho, Tiger, Tiger, Tiger.

Moonshine. Who is it you are calling, sir?
Loobin. The house-dog;
He will devour you at a meal, you vagrants.
In these unseemly rags and caitiff-phizes
How found you your ways hither? or how dar'd
You enter without knocking? (*whistles*).
Moonshine. We beseech you
Spare our lean carcasses.
Inference. And the poor house-dog's teeth.
Loobin. Well, well, away.
Moonshine. (*approaching the door, and apart to Inference*) Fright and an empty stomach
Foretell my dissolution!
Inference. Dear Mr. Moonshine,
I tremble so for your sake!
Moonshine. And I for yours!——
(*Loobin whistles again*) Again he whistles! Oh!
Inference. (*catching Moonshine's arm*) Your arm, your arm,
Inestimable friend!
Moonshine. (*shaking him off*) Zounds, I have much ado
To drag myself. [*exeunt limping, but with haste*
Loobin. Here comes—'tis in good time—
My benefactor.

Re-enter AMBERT.

Ambert. Was there not some noise?
Loobin. I was endeavouring, sir, to fright two vagrants
Who were, I know not with what purpose, prying
Into this pocket-book and slip of paper (*gives them to Ambert, the pocket-book still open*).
Amb. (*looking at the name*) It is the English youth's—you will return it (*A bundle of notes falls as he closes the pocket-book, and is picked up and handed him by Loobin*)

(*reading a slip of paper with which they are held together*) Ten thousand dollars! I believ'd him poor.

Loobin. He always said he was.—The paper, sir,
That first I handed you—forgive me—read it—
There is a name——'tis Mervin——

Amb. Ha!

(*reading the paper*) "A sacred trust held in charge for the only daughter of Mr. Mervin."

——Great God!
I thank thee!——But where *is* my daughter?

Loobin. Sir,
Alas, you seem distress'd.

Amb. (*goes to a table, and writes on a piece of paper, which with the notes, &c. he encloses in the pocket-book*) Return—be quick—
Return this to its owner!——On your life
Tell him not I have seen it!

Loobin. (*taking the pocket-book*) I'll obey.

Amb. Take, take it from my sight; or I shall lose
My reason! (*exit Loobin*)——Reason!
Thou northern light, cold from an icy bosom,
Chill and assuage my fever-beating soul—or,
(*addressing Heaven*) Thou source of mercy, I will welcome madness,
If in my ravings I can see my children! [*exit*

Re-enter LOUISA COURLAND.

Louisa Courl. Yes, on reflection, I will hide my doubts,
And if he have one sentiment of love,
Extract the balsam from his soul, and heal
My aching spirit——Now, Hope, breathe once more,
Or, Indignation, lend me thy support!

Re-enter FREDERIC WORLACE.

Fred. Worl. Louisa, you are pale——that bosom's form'd

To heave with love: why let it palpitate
With anguish? What has happen'd since I left you?
Louisa Courl. (*aside*) How shall I answer him?
Fred. Worl. What? speak, thou soul
Of sensibility. Have I seem'd cold
Of late because grown grave? A gay demean
May be the twin of an ennobling passion;
But your sweet sex are apt, too apt, to think
Them never disunited, and conceive
Light gallantry the only test of feeling:
For an ice-moulded mortal passes he
Whom a susceptive heart disturbs with fears,
Which stamp him a reserv'd, unwelcome guest
Among the fair creation that he loves;
While the deck'd, gallant, and impervious beau
Is thought entranc'd with every angel's form
Before which he mechanically flutters.
You, who have not this blindness of your sex,
Cannot approve it in them——If you can,
Why come, my love, the topic will amuse us,
Speak in their cause——I can nowise divine
With what ingenious reason you'll uphold it.
Louisa Courl. Frederic, no!——The strangers, have you seen them?
Fred. Worl. I could not find them.
Louisa Courl. Have you not a hope,
A single hope, to save me or my father?
Fred. Worl. I'll move this Ambert to a sense of pity.
Louisa Courl. (*looking him stedfastly in the face*) Frederic!
Fred. Worl. My love?
Louisa Courl. Is there no other mean?
Fred. Worl. Why urge the painful answer? There is not.
Louisa Courl. But if you own'd the treasures of the earth——
Fred. Worl. To allay one pang that's beating there (*pointing to her bosom*) I would
Resign them all!

Louisa Courl. (*with faintness*) Indeed!
Fred. Worl. May Heaven's immortal truth
Bear witness that I would!
Louisa Courl. (*in a feeble but resentful tone*) Then I am lost
For ever! (*staggers with faintness to a chair*).
Fred. Worl. Lost! To whom?
Louisa Courl. To happiness
And you!
Fred. Worl. (*offering to take her hand, which she draws from him*) Indeed, Louisa, you distress me!
What have I done? What angers you? You shrink
At my approach—you never did before?
Louisa Courl. For until now I've thought your words sincere——
They've been illusive all!
Fred. Worl. (*after a pause*) Illusive all!
Louisa Courl. Frederic.
Fred. Worl. My soul, my life, do you still call me Frederic?
Louisa Courl. Will you relieve my father?
Fred. Worl. (*aside*) Ah!——I will,
In violation of a sacred trust!
To her reproach what is a perjur'd soul?
A perjur'd soul!——But no, I dare not think! (*feels in his pocket, and misses his pocket-book*).
Pernicious fate, 'tis lost!——and so am I!

Enter LOOBIN.

Loobin. Well, Mr. Frederic——(*aside*) Poor man! he seems
Sunk to despondence.——Mr. Frederic.
Fred. Worl. Loobin!
Loobin. (*giving him the pocket-book.*) This, I believe, belongs to you. [*exit Louisa unperceived*
Fred. Worl. It does, it does! My friend, you have restor'd me
My only hope, my sole dependence. Shall I,

Can I reward you?

Loobin. (*loooking in his face*) There is my reward, sir,
I see it sparkling there—I ask none else. [*exit*

Fred. Worl. But, Loobin——he has gone.——Now, my Louisa,
(*opens his pocket-book*) Ah! what is here?
(*reads*) "Remember this is a sacred trust, and never, unless at the approach of death, to be parted with to any but my daughter."
Memento of the trust
Mistakingly confided to a man
Who on his death-bed only knew repentance.——
Sad shade, if thou in thy last mortal hour
Didst solemnly transfer the charge to me,
The hand of Heaven, to preserve my soul,
Has drawn this paper forth——for I have not!
It was secreted here (*searching a small pocket formed in the lining of his coat*) and here—amazement!
Here it still is——(*comparing the two*) I know them not apart!
Yet, this was dated sixteen years ago,
And this—to-day!——Louisa—(*looking round*) Ha!—Oh, no,
She would not trifle with my feelings thus!
Besides, she could not; for an oath here seal'd
My lips, and stood the warmth of love.

Re-enter LOUISA COURLAND.

(*taking her hand*) Louisa,
How could you leave me as you did?

Louisa Courl. (*withdrawing her hand*) That I
Might gather strength to ask a final question.

Fred. Worl. What angry pest has lighted on our peace?

Louisa Courl. Can you relieve my parent?

Fred. Worl. Yes, I can,
I'll soothe the rigid temper of this Ambert.

Louisa Courl. (*indignantly*) And is that all?

Fred. Worl. Can I do more?
Louisa Courl. What! can you not?
Fred. Worl. Great Heaven knows I cannot!
Louisa Courl. What prevents?
Fred. Worl. The hope I cherish to be sav'd hereafter.
Louisa Courl. Alas! I tremble for your future state!
Fred. Worl. Louisa!
Louisa Courl. Frederic, we must part!
Fred. Worl. Part?
Louisa Courl. Yes, and
For ever!
Fred. Worl. Say not so; and I will save
Your father!
Louisa Courl. Ah! (*with indignant surprise*) Indeed?
Fred. Worl. Be mine again!
I will restore him! on my soul I will!
Louisa Courl. Restore him to me, and you have my thanks;
But——(*aside*) Spirit of virtue aid my faltering tongue!
Love is extinguish'd; and we meet no more! [*exit*
Fred. Worl. Yet stay, a moment stay——Who has done this? [*exit*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An apartmentin* MR. COURLAND'S *house.*

Enter INFERENCE *and* MOONSHINE, *leaning on the arms of* MR. COURLAND.

Moonshine. And, most indubitably, Mr. Courland,
Ere our return had we not condescended
To grace a paltry farmer's wretched board,
Consume five loaves of his unleaven'd bread,
As many cakes of what he call'd cream-cheese,
And almost half a firkin of d—mn'd butter
(All which the fellow had the effrontery
To proffer us for naught)—if, as I said——

Inference. I ask your pardon, general Magnavantine:
For an exact construction of this sentence
You should observe precision.
Moonshine. (*off his guard*) Sir?
Inference. Be cool:
Conjunction *if* must, thus recurring, form
Anadiplosis or reduplication,
Which is—when 'tis—a fine rhetoric figure;
But it doth seem that your parenthesis,
"All which" and so forth ought to be omitted,
Because the omission must improve the style,
And leave no flaw-like injury in the sense.
Moonshine. (*apart to Inference*) You are a lumber-headed jackanapes!
(*to Mr. Courland*) Excuse my friend the honourable Scholium:
He is a slave to physiology.
Inference. Philology, philology, you mean,
Good general Magnavantine.
Moonshine. (*whispering Mr. Courland*) And moreover
A knavish puppy.
Mr. Courl. (*loudly*) How, a knavish puppy!
The general, Mr. Scholium, calls you puppy.——
(*aside*) Scoundrels, I hope they'll shoot each other!——Yes,
He calls you puppy, and presumes to assert——
Moonshine. (*apart to Courland*) Hush, sir, I pray you——'twas in confidence,
Mr. Courl. Why, Mr. Scholium, can you bear an insult?
Inference. Sir, did you speak to me?——I was observing
The neatness of that cornice——prettily,
Prettily moulded—prettily in truth!
Who, Mr. Courland, was your architect?
Mr. Courl. Excuse me, sir——the general charges you
With being a rank knave.

Inference. Grave? Why I am
At times a little grave—that is the truth.
Mr. Courl. He says you are a *knave*, sir.
Inference. Oh no, it can't be true——can it be, general?
Moonshine. True? what, my worthy sir?——Oh ho, ah ha,
I have bethought myself: you mean the late,
The strange adventure we have to recount——
(*to Mr. Courl.*) I'll tell it you: while we were at the mansion
Of the good gentleman upon the hill——
Mr. Courl. Ambert, that paper-meddling hell-hound? Ha!
Moonshine. The self-same rascal——while at his house, sir,
Upon a slab we saw a pocket-book:
It was of snow-white satin——(*to Inference*) Am I right, pray?
Inference. Permit me—no: the colour was jet-black.
Moonshine. Ten thousand dollars were its vast contents,
A sacred trust——
Inference. Which from a written scrap
Of paper we inferr'd.
Moonshine. A sacred trust,
And held, yes held, in charge for the sole daughter
Of one—one——
Inference. Mervin.
Mr. Courl. Ah! Have you the pocket-book
In your possession still?
Moonshine. Oh, no.
Mr. Courl. No!
Moonshine. No, sir.
Inference. For we return'd it to the owner, and——
Mr. Courl. Damnation, who was he?
Moonshine. A Mr. Frederic Worlace.
Inference. We conclude
From having seen his name upon the cover.

Mr. Courl. Worlace? Incredible——(*aside*) Yet it may be,
May be?——It is; and I will overreach him!
(*after a pause*) Worlace was wont to ask for Mervin's daughter,
None could extort the motive of his question;
Besides, he seem'd too poor to bear a fortune,
The only key that opens to my soul! [*exit*

Moonshine. He leaves us in a fit of furious anger.

Inference. To me his last fit seem'd joy's paroxysm;
But whether it were joy or rage that mov'd him,
It was a blustering tempest of the brain:
My ratiocination can do much,
And yet it only made him rave the more,
As would cold water given to a mad dog.

Moonshine. Now, sir, my book, or rather books of travels:
It is an age since they've entranc'd my thought——
If Fortune will but smile upon my fancy——
And, Mr Inference, do you think he will?

Inference. He? Fortune was born of the female gender.

Moonshine. Then, curse her, she will frown: of woman kind
I ne'er saw one that did not frown on me——
And we have both liv'd long on Fortune's frown.

Inference. (*dolefully*) Granted—but how?

Moonshine. How lives the bear
That prowls all winter o'er the polar ice,
Preying upon the atmospheric gas,
Or subtler essence of electric fluid?

Inference. Fortune, methinks, should smile on you at least,
If 'twere but that she might seem singular,
And thus indulge a foible of her sex.

Moonshine. But I have been assur'd when woman frowns not
Her smile's a frigid one——may Heaven forbid!
For ere I'd court in seeking fervid bliss

The scornful radiance of a damsel's eye,
I would endeavour to reach India's clime
Through the cold bosom of a north-east passage.
Inference. Which I conclude you've done——in fancy, sir,
A safe conveyance, much in vogue for realms
Through which 'tis meant to write a book of travels.
But you have misjudg'd woman: she is coy,
A little coy, perhaps; but she is Nature's child:
To give a zest unto her charms she chills them,
As her wise mother freezes the persimmon
To make it palatable——Then her speech
Puts forth so soon the blossoms of her wit.
Moonshine. Too early blossoms promise little fruit;
And if you hold the opposite opinion,
You're very headstrong, Mr. Inference.
Inference. Fallacious and sophistic are your words;
They are vindictive, and they constitute
An *argumentum ab invidiâ deductum*, a *non causa pro causâ*, and——

Enter MR. PRIMEVAL, *habited in a dress denoting his attachment to antiquity.*

Mr. Prim. Your most obedient, gentlemen.
Moonshine. (*bowing with great suppleness*) And yours.
(*aside*) He may be rich.
Mr. Prim. In your discussions doth
Antiquity e'er claim your notice, sirs?
Moonshine. We never, sir, have argued on aught else.——
But, is it possible? Do I behold
An antiquary? (*Primeval answers in the affirmative with a bow of much self-complacency*) The occasion must not
Pass unimprov'd: then open your mind's spring;
My ears would fain imbibe a flow of knowledge.
Mr. Prim. Incomparable men! whose very garbs

Speak your respect for all that bears the stamp
Of former ages, we'll converse awhile,
And stem time's current to its rippling source——
But first I would consult you on a point
Of no small matter to my heart's repose:
My property is large——
Inference. And my desire
To please——
Moonshine. (*shoving aside Inference*) Don't mention wealth, dear sir, with me
It is a secondary object. But——
Forgive this freedom (*presses Primeval's hand.*)
Mr. Prim. My intended heir,
Whose font-name, Adam, erst won my regard,
Is in his morals very dissolute.
Inference. And, sir, of course a most unworthy object——
I have full many reasons in reserve:
Wherefore if you——
Moonshine. (*again thrusting Inference aside, and pressing Primeval's hand*) Respected sir, you know not
How much I am devoted to your will!
Mr. Prim. Then, gentlemen, if you can call to mind
An instance from antiquity wherein——
Inference. An instance from——
Moonshine. I cannot recollect one:
Not e'en Tiberius——
Mr. Prim. Hem—Tiberius? Yes,
He nam'd Caligula heir to his crown
Because Caligula was a mere rake-hell.
The question is determin'd: I've resolv'd
That Adam shall inherit mine estate.
Moonshine. (*aside to Inference*) Why, d-mn the fellow, he would welcome hanging,
Were he persuaded it would be to die
More majorum.
Mr. Prim Hanging! I think I overheard that phrase.

Moonshine. (*alarmed*) What, heard me use it? Never——I appeal
To Mr. Scholium if the phrase you mention
Ever escap'd my lips.
Inference. (*to Primeval*) Scarcely a moment since
The phrase you mention *did* escape his lips.
Mr. Prim. Then I'm convinc'd the practice it defines
Must be the relic of an ancient usage.
The earliest sufferer you can recollect, pray?
Inference. (*apart to Primeval*) That fellow's grandfather——Don't mention it.
Moonshine. (*overhearing him*) Sir!
Inference. He, poor man——
Mr. Prim. What?
Moonshine. Mr. Inference.
Inference. Well, Mr. Moonshine.
Mr. Prim. (*aside*) Moonshine, Inference!
(*takes out and examines a small memorandum-book, while they in dumb show altercate without observing him.*)
I've had occasion to record these names!
(*reads*) "Requested in a letter from Messrs Dablings and Co. to arrest for an *old* debt two persons who embarked early in the spring for this country, and whose real names are Inference and Moonshine: the one is mum, mum, mum—the other mum, mum——"
Their persons also answer the description——
Yes, they must be secur'd: imprisonment
Is not a new invention. [*exit*
Inference. Well, well, I will omit the usual form
Of the prosyllogismus——my conclusion
Is to confess my fault and crave your mercy.
Moonshine. Know I can strip you of your borrowed name,
Nay, with a breath, sir, blow you to perdition.
Inference. So closely are our destinies allied
Methinks that it would be your dying breath.
But hear me; for I'll reason to the last:

The gentleman mistook me not: I spoke
A truth in humorous play; and he drew back
In pleasurable wonder, not alarm.
The point of what I said graz'd with some force
The memory of your grandfather, and thus
Affected you; but to the antiquary
The whole appear'd a jest——and rather than
A witty thought be balk'd, who does deny
One's best friend ought to suffer——Such are you
To me.

Re-enter PRIMEVAL, *who, unobserved by* MOONSHINE *and* INFERENCE, *points them out to an officer, and exit.*

Moonshine. Well, for the future know your proper distance.
Interpret not my condescension into
Allowance for familiarity.
Retire, d'ye hear? I would converse awhile
With the grave gentleman——(*turns, and with surprise sees the officer instead of Primeval*) Ah!——(*aside to Inference*) Do you know him?
Inference. (*aside to Moonshine*) It is not Old Times, is it?
Officer. (*aside*) They suspect me.
'Tis very well I happen'd to be here:
I'll take them——No: they're said to hate each other,
And they shall nab each other——(*to them as they are endeavouring to withdraw*) Gentlemen,
How are you?
Inference. Pretty well, of course.
Moonshine. But, sir,
In haste at present.
Officer. (*to Moonshine*) I can't help it.
A word with you. (*Inference during their conversation tries several times to escape unseen, but is as often prevented by the eyes of Moonshine or the officer.*)

Moonshine. Ye—yes, sir——(*apart to Inference*)
My dear friend,
Prop of my life, sole stay in my distress,
Leave not the room: his aspect is so threatening.
Officer. (*apart to Moonshine, and pointing to Inference*)That's he I'm after—do you know him?
Moonshine. (*apart to the officer*) No, sir,
No—not, not intimately: yester morn
Was the first time I saw him; and e'er since
The fellow has been worrying my footsteps,
And now he passes for my shadow, curse him.
Officer. (*apart to Moonshine*) Conduct your shadow to the county-gaol;
And I'll be sworn you shall return without it.
Moonshine. (*aside, viewing his own spare figure*)
'Twill not be very wondrous if I do.——
May it please you, sir, where is the county gaol?
Officer. (*apart to Moonshine*) Not half a mile hence
——'tis an old dull pile
Of mouldy stones.
Moonshine. (*apart to Officer*) Ah, ha.——But who is it
You take that wight to be?
Officer. (*apart to Moonshine*) One Scholium,——
(*aside*) As it is meet you think.
Moonshine. (*apart to the officer*) Said you one Scholium?
Officer. (*apart to Moons.*) Ay, to be sure.
Moonshine. (*aside*) Then I am safe: the fool
Has been contracting debts in his false name.——
Trust to my cunning: I will cage the scoundrel.
Officer. (*apart to Moons.*) I do.
But lest he think we are in plot against him
I'll whisper some light nonsense in his ear,
And pass myself for a vain, busy fool.
Moonshine. (*apart to the officer*) Well thought on, faith!
Officer. Ho, Mr. Scholium.
Inference. (*starting*) Who calls?
Officer. 'Tis I, your friend.

Inference. Wha—what would you, sir?

Officer. (*apart to Inf.*) What is that fellow's general reputation?

It won't bear scrutiny, will it?

Inference. (*recovering from his alarm, and apart to the officer*) Whose? his? (*pointing to Moons.*)

My words, however, you will not repeat?——

Officer (*apart to Inf.*) No, I'm above it.——But let us withdraw

Some paces farther: he must not o'erhear us. (*retires with Inference up the stage, and holds him for some moments in seeming conversation; after which they again come forward.——Moonshine as before looking about with affected indifference*)

Inference. (*apart to the officer*) Upon my word, a practicable scheme:

You've given your deduction the appearance
Of an intuitive position.——This man,
E'er parch'd in soul and craz'd of late in mind,
Would moreo'er write his travels through this country:
Yes, you'll do well to chain him to the floor
As a confirmed lunatic. Besides——
But trust to me; I'll lure him to his dungeon.

Officer. (*apart to Inf.*) I doubt you not.——Farewel, good gentlemen.

[*exit, winking to them alternately*

Inference. (*approaching Moons.*) Hem, hem.

Moonshine. Hem.

Inference. That is a suspicious person;

He, I would say, who has this moment left us,

Moonshine. An ordinary chap, I pledge my word.

Inference. A lovely day.

Moonshine. A captivating one.

Inference. It much reminds me of our recent ramble.

Moonshine. Ramble, my dear sir? I have no objection,

None in the world.

Inference. What, to a walk? Agreed:

We indulg'd too freely at the farmer's board.

Moonshine. Methinks we did.
Inference. More exercise,
If not too violent, must aid digestion.——
What course will you we take?
Moonshine. I little care;
But if in truth you have no choice, we'll visit
The mouldy, massy mansion on the road:
It yester eve, when at a distance kenn'd,
Impress'd us as a ruin.—What say you?
Inference. My dear sir, I am always at your service.
Moonshine. And may I never prize your friendly zeal
Less than I do at present.——Come, aught like
Dilapidation charms me, and this is
The only cis-Atlantic house I've seen
Worthy description in my book of travels.
You said, I think, you would be my companion?
Inference. Can I refuse my friend? I will go with you
——(*aside*) As certainly as I'll return without you.
Moonshine. The walk must please.
Inference. I never shall forget it.
Moonshine. (*aside*) I think you never will.——Dear Inference,
My arm. (*offering his arm, and approaching the door*)
Inference. (*taking his arm*) Thank you, my dearest Moonshine, thank you.——
(*aside*) He's caught—infallibly!
Moonshine. (*aside*) It takes! it takes! [*exeunt*

SCENE II.—*An apartment in* AMBERT'S *house.*

LOUISA COURLAND *and* AMBERT.

Louisa Courl. Yes, and suppose a child of yours—a daughter——
Amb. Oh, memory! memory!
Louisa Courl. Have you, sir, a daughter?
Amb. I once had!—once!
Louisa Courl. Then fancy her while living——
Amb. Who has pronounc'd her dead?

Louisa Courl. I have not.
Amb. Yet—yet,
There's fear she may be dead—and, if she is
Let memory die too! What is remembrance,
E'en of past bliss, to the afflicted wretch?
A horrid glare left on the blind man's brain
From the light's last impression.———Oh, instruct me
How to forget the feelings of a parent!———
Or feign a story that my daughter lives;
And every word your fancy can suggest
Shall seem to flow from truth!
My moments shall no longer hang like hours
On the dull senses that disclose reality.——
No, I will melt down reason to my wish,
And think my children live!
Louisa Courl. Perhaps your daughter does.
Amb. Why yes—you smile; and that speaks hope: she is,
She is alive!
Louisa Courl. Then think her in distress,
Imploring mercy from a stranger!
Amb. Ah!
Louisa Courl. And mercy in a suffering father's cause.
Amb. I do, I do!
Louisa Courl. Then think that stranger deaf to her entreaties.
Amb. Impossible!
Louisa Courl. Yet if it could be, what would he deserve?
Amb. Every affliction but the loss of children!
Louisa Courl. (*grasping his hand*) Then do I plead in vain?——That starting tear——
Amb. Your father is restor'd. (*pressing her hand to his lips*)
My faculties were all—all too transfix'd;
Or I had mention'd his release before.
Louisa Courl. Releas'd!—indeed? Will you not tell me how?
Amb. Pious, angelic innocent, I will.

The lightest pang you have endur'd for him
Meets retribution here.

Enter ROBERT *and* HEBE.

Robert. Zo, as I was zaying, the queer old body, Mr. Primeval, has given up all thoughts of Harry for a son-in-law, not finding his manners sufficiently ancient.——But come, thank our benefactor, Hebe, and repay him with a smile that will show him how happy he has made us.

Hebe. (*adjusting her bonnet*) Yes, Robert.

Robert. Pshaw, never mind your bonnet now.——(*leading her to Amb.*) Zir, here is my zister: she being a female has come to speak for herself and me too. Her heart is as full as mine, I'll answer for it; and she has a wondrous knack in zetting it afloat.——Come, Hebe, don't you blush, child—what's the matter?

Hebe. I only fear I shall not be able to say enough.

Robert. There are few women, zister, who don't labour under the zame apprehension. But take courage—there.

Hebe. Indeed, I have so much to say, I know not where to begin.——(*to Amb.*) Sir—sir——

Amb. (*taking her hand*) That tear, good girl, is worth ten thousand words. [*exit*

Enter at another door HARRY COURLAND, *who runs immediately to* HEBE.

Robert. Harry, you here and——

Enter MR. COURLAND, *followed by an Officer.*

Louisa Courl. (*falling into Mr. Courland's arms*) My father!

Mr. Courl. (*not returning her embrace*) Child, you're troublesome.

Louisa Courl. (*supported by Harry*) Am I?

Mr. Courl. Secure that fellow, Mr. Officer.
Robert. (*with amazement*) Who? me?
Officer. (*tapping him on the shoulder*) Yes, you.
Hebe. (*to the officer*) No, no, you don't mean him;
He is my brother! you must not mean him,
Indeed, indeed you must not!
Officer. Why, young woman——
Robert. (*to the officer*) Don't open your lips, rascal, but do your duty—I will follow you.
Hebe. No, Robert, stay—one moment stay; for now
I can speak—yes, I can: I will plead for you!
Who now will be our benefactor? You,
Or you, or you?
Harry Courl. (*to Mr. Courl.*) Look there, sir, and refrain from persecution!
Was it not her brother who gave up the bond
In virtue whereof you had been imprison'd?
Mr. Courl. Yes, and in doing so the fool forgot
That it was needful to secure himself:
The debt has not been regularly paid.
Harry Courl. Can you be so ungrateful—nay, dishonest?
Mr. Courl. (*enraged*) Boy!
Harry Courl. I feel an interest in that angel's peace
And, sir——
Mr. Courl. Away, no more!
Louisa Courl. Ah, then hear me!
Think on the horrors of a prison! You
Yourself have just escap'd them, and you must
Remember what they were.
Mr. Courl. Phough, phough.
Louisa Courl. My father!
Mr. Courl. Girl, I am not your father.
Louisa Courl. No?
Mr. Courl. Your father
Must be in heaven——I've at least good cause
To think he is not in this world.
Harry Courl. (*supporting his sister*) Oh, sir,
Be explicit! What do you mean?

Louisa Courl. Can you
Deny us?
Mr. Courl. I have told you so already.
Harry Courl. Then we were once——
Mr. Courl. No, I forgot myself:
You never have been progeny of mine.——
One Mervine——now deceas'd——an old acquaintance——
He is your father (*all start with amazement*).
Harry Courl. Who?
Mr. Courl. Boy, do you doubt?——
But I have other evidence (*stamps*).

Enter DOROTHY.

(*pointing to Dorothy*) 'tis there.——
(*apart to Dorothy*) Now you may speak the truth.
Dorothy. Great Heaven be prais'd!
Mr. Courl. (*to Dorothy*) Before this company disclose the secret——
You know it well——pertaining to these children.
Harry Courl. (*to Dorothy*) As you believe in an immortal soul
Tell us what you remember of our birth,
And who our parents were?
Dorothy. I will tell you, I will tell you, sweet young gentleman.——And (*to Louisa*)—yes, you are his sister. I must weep: I can't help it, I can't help it! It is many a long year, indeed it is, since I parted with you!
Harry Courl. With us? Whose children?
Dorothy. One Mr. Mervin's——he left you in my care.
Louisa. Could he abandon us?
Dorothy. Alas, he thought I would be faithful.——Yes, he did, he did; and I have deceived him.——Well, well: just before the death of your mother some business of importance called him abroad; and in six months from that time this gentleman (*Mr. Courland*), whose wife had died not long before, with threats and promises overpowered my resolution, telling me he wished

your father to believe you dead, and persuading me to retire with you to a place far distant from this village.

Mr. Courl. (*apart to Dorothy*) Beware.

Dorothy. Yet your father had always loved him, and had been about to settle on him a large estate; when an accident diminished his fortune, and the estate was designed for you. Nevertheless, Mr. Courland still pretended so great a regard for you that poor Mr. Mervin, believing he would be faithful, made over all to him, requesting that as it was a family-estate he would on no account, let your profits be what they might, convert it into money. Fifteen months had barely passed away after his departure, when there came from we knew not where a report of the poor gentleman's death; and Mr. Courland, who readily believed it, finding me resolute against bringing you up to hardship, chose, rather than acknowledge who you were, to call you his own. Accordingly, a woman at the end of a few years was employed to receive you from me, and return with you as children he had once delivered to her keeping.

Harry. (*to Mr. Courland*) And for what purpose, sir?

Mr. Courl. Humanity.

Dorothy. No, young gentleman, it was avarice.

Mr. Courl. Woman!

Dorothy. He could then without suspicion call the estate his own—he soon did this, nay, sold it. He, moreover, told me that you as his children might produce considerable fortunes; and that I should share the profit of your marriages.

Mr. Courl. Thou jargon'd fury, it is false!

Dorothy. I swear on my hope in the Almighty's mercy, it is true!

Harry. Will you, sir, hazard the same solemn oath?

Mr. Courl. Villain!——

But where's young Worlace?—and this Ambert too?—(*to Dorothy*) Fool, dread my vengeance!

Dorothy. Sir, you have told me to speak the truth; and I must speak it fully.

Mr. Court. Away this instant, blighted jade, away! [*exit Dorothy*

(*to the officer*) Perform your duty. [*exit*

Harry. (*supporting Louisa, and addressing Hebe as she clasps her hands in silent agony*) Wait, a moment wait, thou suffering angel!

Hebe. No, I must follow him! [*exeunt Officer and Robert, Hebe following*

Harry. Louisa, be compos'd——and there is Frederic:

I'll leave you to his care.

Louisa. Oh, no, no, no!

Harry. Why not? His nature's form'd to sympathize;

Besides, look there at that afflicted spirit!

I will release her brother! [*exit*

Louisa. Honest pride,

Revive my sinking heart with fortitude

To bear, with power to resent!

Enter FREDERIC WORLACE.

Fred. Worl. Louisa——

Miss Courland then——

Oh deign an answer to this cold address,

Nor fear relapsing love.

Louisa. (*indignantly*) There is no fear.

Fred. Worl. For your affection now has chang'd its course.

Why was it wont to flow in such pure streams?

Louisa. Because it glided o'er a rock that could

Not mingle with it.——We, we parted, sir,

To meet no more.

Fred. Worl. 'Twas your determination.

Louisa. Why has it been defeated?

Fred. Worl. To separate, but separate as friends.

Louisa. Not where respect's extinguish'd. (*going*)

Fred. Worl. (*in great agitation*) Yet one moment,
And then——
Louisa. (*alarmed at his manner*) What?
Fred. Worl. (*with faintness*) We——will part for ever!
Louisa. Frederic,
Are you not well? Speak, and remove my fears!
Fred. Worl. Your fears?—for me?
Louisa. Yes, yes, for you!
Fred. Worl. Indeed? (*catching her hand, but almost immediately releasing it*)——
(*aside*) 'Tis but the flash of her expiring love.
Louisa. What ails you? You are pale——oh trifle not!
Fred. Worl. Louisa, as these moments mark the term
Of our late intimacy, it is not
With waking transient flames I would employ them.
An Englishman I landed, as you know,
But two years since a stranger in this country.
Accident led me to your father's house;
Louisa. (*aside, remembering Courland is not her father*) Ah!
Fred. Worl. Then my heart submitted to a power,
And from its magic has not since been free;
Louisa, no, not for an instant free.
If not love, generous pity, which to me seem'd love,
Drew forth your smiles, and fed a treacherous hope
That has involv'd my being in its fate.
But I cannot upbraid you: I esteem,
Still must respect your virtues, and in proof
Would to their custody confide a trust,
An all-important and most serious trust.——
Will you receive it?—'twill be charity
To a poor orphan—one I never saw—
A female.——You consent.——She owes her birth
To an American who, taken ill
In a remote and dreary part of Europe,
Plac'd in the hands of one esteem'd his friend
A fortune for this child, his only daughter.
The man entrusted with the charge I knew,

And on the eve of my depart from London
Saw in his death-bed moments.——With a voice
Enfeebled by remorse he, trembling, own'd
Having withheld the whole amount 'till then,
And then alive to every pang of guilt
He wish'd most fervently to make atonement,
Bequeathing to my care all he was worth,
A sum just equal to the trust he had broken.
Louisa. And for what purpose?
Fred. Worl. That on my arrival,
Repairing to the village of her birth,
I should inquire for the defrauded orphan,
And on discovery fix her in her right.
My search prov'd fruitless——
Louisa. Fruitless!—and for whom?
Fred. Worl. Do you forget? 'Twas one Louisa Mervin.
Louisa. Forget? Oh no! It *was* Louisa Mervin!
Fred. Worl. That look! that smile——(*aside*) will beam upon my grave,——
I must be brief——
Louisa. You sought one of the name,
But until now you never told me wherefore!
Fred. Worl. An oath forbade it ere——
Louisa. Why do you pause?
Fred. Worl. A dread presentiment should seize my thought,
Or the unhappy orphan be discover'd.
Louisa. She *is* discover'd!
Fred. Worl. How?
Louisa. My name is Mervin!
He whom I thought my father has declar'd it.
Indulge in your amazement—I have not
Recover'd yet from mine.——Yes, Frederic, yes,
Now I am yours again! (*falling into his arms*)
I knew there was a fortune in your hands,
I thought too it was yours, I thought you could
Deceive me!
Fred. Worl. An acute but short-liv'd wrong
Which this ecstatic moment shall obliterate!

Re-enter AMBERT.

Amb. (*taking Frederic's hand*) My youthful friend, I was too harsh this morning.

Fred. Worl. The fault was mine: your liberal spirit toward me——

Amb. (*with displeasure*) Has Loobin then——

Fred. Worl. No, sir, 'twas accident.

Amb. Well, well.

(*to Louisa, whose hand he takes*) Your father, have you seen him since we met?

Fred. Worl. You've cut her to the heart! she has no father!

Amb. How?

Fred. Worl. He whom she esteem'd such has denied her.

Amb. Broken the first, most sacred tie of kindred?
Unnatural wretch! left her, perhaps, in want?

Fred. Worl. No, not in want (*exhibiting his pocket-book and notes*): these will ensure her competence.
These at this instant are at her disposal.

Amb. No, never, never, never!

Fred. Worl. Sir?

Amb. Young man,
Forget not Heaven's tribunal!

Fred. Worl. When I do
May Heaven abandon me!——This is a sum
Bequeath'd her by her father.

Amb. Mr. Courland?

Fred. Worl, No, sir: her name is Mervin.

Amb. Mervin! Mervin!——
(*aside*) Parent of truth, let me outlive this moment,
And wonder'll yield to gratitude!

Robert. Here she comes, miss—poor soul, she looks az if she had been casting out an evil spirit.

Amb. (*aside*) Ah, that foul plague !——
Yet if her icy utterance soften into
The all-atoning words: these are your children !

Re-enter DOROTHY.

——(*apart to Dorothy*) Speak, and without evasion,
all you know !——
As if the breath with which you close the tale
Would waft your spirit to another world !

Dorothy. (*with remorseful fear*) I will, sir.

Louisa. Where, where did you leave off?

Dorothy. Where, gentle ones, I said that Mr. Courland passed you for his children——But at length he has, I don't know why, altered his mind. He still thinks, however, that your father is dead, but he is wrong: your father is alive. (*Harry and Louisa clasp their hands in silent ecstacy.*)

Fred. Worl. (*aside*) This must explain the late mysterious paper.

Amb. (*apart to Dorothy*) Quick, tell them all; for I
am too enraptur'd !

Dorothy. (*apart to Ambert*) Yes, sir——I did not know it myself till some days since, when I was surprised by his appearance after an absence of almost seventeen years. I first thought it was his spirit come to rebuke me.

Louisa. But no, it was not so? No, no, it was not !

Dorothy. It was he himself: he told me that when thought to be on the point of death in a distant part of Europe he left ten thousand dollars for his only daughter in the charge of a slight acquaintance, who, on account of remote and urgent business, was under the necessity to leave him at his then believed approaching dissolution. Soon after this, however, he recovered, and then chanced to receive an old letter from Mr. Courland saying that you were dead——(*to Harry*) He